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ALLAN NEVINS

DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History, Columbia University

Sixth recipient of the Society's Gold Medal for Achievement in History
November 19, 1954

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THE GOLDEN THREAD IN THE HISTORY OF NEW YORK

by ALLAN NEVINS*

THE NEW-YORK Historical Society begins to grow old along with its city. Age, to be sure, is comparative. Beside London or Paris, New York is young; but compared with Chicago and San Francisco it is old—it had 300,000 people when Chicago was but a cluster of cabins in a swamp, and half a million when the '49ers pitched their tents on Yerba Buena beach. As the Society celebrates its 150th birthday and the city approaches its 350th, we may well feel a sense of perspective in surveying the past. In philosophic mood, we can try to extricate some of the half-hidden meanings of New York's variegated, tumultuous career. About every great city, as moss gathers upon its stones, traditions around its streets and squares, and literary memories

* Dr. Nevins, DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History at Columbia University, delivered the address here published at the Society's Sesqui-Centennial Celebration on November 19, 1954, at which time he was awarded the Society's sixth Gold Medal for Achievement in History. The citation accompanying the award, as read by President Beekman, will be found herein, pp. 94–95.

about its old houses, hangs a mysterious, intangible romance, to the heart of which we long to pierce. Sometimes, as we listen to the low roar of the myriad human activities, the city seems an animate being, trying to say something to us.

A tumultuous history indeed! High above trees and bridge in Riverdale stands the effigy of Henry Hudson, gazing southward down his gleaming river and fixing his stern mariner's eye upon the misty towers of Manhattan. The Hudson and New York better fit Pope's lines than do the Thames and London, to which he applied them:

> Her figured stream in waves of silver rolled
> And on her banks Augusta rose in gold.

As we take our stand beside Karl Gruppe's fine bronze statute of Hudson, fancy can paint a series of pictures on these mists above Manhattan: the windmills of the primitive Dutch hamlet; Adriaen Block's yacht *Restless* darting about the island waters; the Duke of York's four ships sending his soldiers ashore to raise the English flag above Fort James, till then Fort Amsterdam; the mustering of troops in King William's and King George's Wars; the riots of Whig and Tory about the Liberty Pole; the stately close of one epoch and opening of another on Evacuation Day, Washington's troops swinging down Broadway; the angry grief of the populace as Alexander Hamilton was carried into a Jane Street house to die; the rapturous celebrations over the Erie Canal and Croton water; the burning of Crystal Palace; the shameful scenes of the Draft Riots; the mighty funerals of Greeley and Grant; the opening of Brooklyn Bridge with parades and fireworks—scenes suggesting that New York has lived its three and a half centuries with an intensity given to few cities in history.

The spirit of a city finds various expression. Sometimes it is in a piece of architecture; Rome put much of her vital essence into St. Peter's, and Paris into the Louvre. Sometimes it is in a series of books; the popular mind and heart of London were laid bare by Charles Dickens. Sometimes it is in the soul of a single commanding figure, so that we are unable to think of Florence without remembering Lorenzo the Magnificent. Sometimes the

spirit seems expressed in an ordeal, like those of Richmond and Coventry; sometimes rather in a "series of preeminences." Whatever the expression, it has an emotional foundation; it appeals not to our material ambitions, but to our ideal aspirations. Some have thought that New York's quintessential spirit is best summed up in her skyscrapers, their tops lost in the gathering clouds of a winter's day; some in the great bridges which link her with the outer world; some, like Ernest Poole, in her busy harbor. The poet Edwin Markham wrote that much of it lay in the frantic stock-market pit, while the kindlier bard Edmund Clarence Stedman selected a modern Pan in Wall Street: an Italian organ-grinder sending forth his music by the columns of the Sub-Treasury.

It is impossible, however, to compress the special distinction of New York in any single work or idea. No poem, novel, or architectural work can sum up the life of a metropolis which grew in 150 years from sixty thousand to eight millions; from the Old New York that Dr. John W. Francis described in his memorable anniversary discourse of 1857 before this Society, so little and so quaint, to the magalopolis the bare mention of whose innumerable facets the WPA *City Guide* compressed with difficulty into six hundred pages.

Among the novelists, William Dean Howells in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* did paint one superb canvas of New York in the 1880s, panoramic in its depiction of oil millionaires, journalists, artists, boarding-house keepers, social climbers, and labor agitators; but how much he left out! Henry James in *Washington Square* fixed a narrower image of genteel middle-class life in a backwater of the busy city, leaving out still more. Edith Wharton gave us grave, careful studies of New York fashion, now exhaling so antiquated a flavor as to seem unreal; Stephen Crane a dissection of New York vice in his merciless *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets;* Abraham Cahan a moving narrative of immigrant toil in *The Rise of David Levinksy*. But the city has had no novelist to do for it what Balzac did for Paris, Dickens for London. Among its short-story writers H. C. Bunner, Brander Mat-

thews, O. Henry, and Richard Harding Davis have left us many a memorable vignette; its essayists, Simeon Strunsky, Robert Cortes Holliday, E. B. White, and others have laid handsome tribute at its feet; and we can never forget what Walt Whitman did for the ferries, car-lines, and trottoirs of his "city of spires and masts." Still, New York is too huge and many-sided, its roofed sierras too thronged by restless myriads, to be caught by any one man or work.

We might add that it is too protean, too subject to incessant phantasmagoric change. Of all cities it is the most continuously self-transforming. Its architectural and social record is a palimpsest. Over its skyscrapers hangs some demon forever waving a wand and exclaiming "Presto, Change!" At his command the change comes—comes through growth, the successive waves of immigration from abroad and migration from within, the passion for rebulding engendered by high land values, the want of reverence for the past. More of Roman Londinium is visible in present-day London than of Dutch New Amsterdam in modern New York. The citizen who visits a summer resort for a fortnight finds on his return that some corner of the town is altered beyond recognition, and usually for the better.

But although we must consent to multiple interpretations of New York's past we may still try to discover the one expression of the city's spirit which offers the happiest augury for the future. What line of activities and men gives it its brightest lustre? At once we find ourselves confronted by a difficulty. The metropolis has so many titles to a secondary type of distinction, so few claims to a truly primary kind of eminence. It has so much that is highly creditable, so little that strikes an apex of achievement.

We can point, of course, to New York's proud line of shipowners, merchants, and financiers, who have made Manhattan the commercial and financial center not only of the Western Hemisphere but the globe. Who can deny that the solid greatness of the city rests largely on mercantile labors? "Children of commerce," Gouverneur Morris termed New Yorkers. A cen-

tury ago Walter Barrett, Clerk, sang the trader's praises. "A glorious occupation on this continent," he wrote, "is that of a merchant! There is no class of citizens that excel, or even equal him, except it be editors. Lawyers are respectable, if they conduct their business properly; but in this community they rarely raise their heads unless so lucky as to be patronized by merchants." Running through a list of eminent attorneys, he added: "They are all rich. Would they have become so but for the business afforded by merchants? No." The doctors also were supported by merchants; even the clergy depended upon them as parishioners. It was significant that at an early date the New York Custom House became the chief source of Federal revenue.

What a romance hangs about these princes of the mercantile world!—about William H. Aspinwall, who developed the Isthmus of Panama, gave his name to one of its ports, and built up the early California trade; about Robert B. Minturn, whose packets ran to Europe, China, and the West Indies; about the DeForest family, specializing in La Plata hides and leather; about Gideon Lee, who, making a fortune in trade, was our last mayor elected by the Common Council; about James Boorman the iron merchant, first head of the Hudson River Railroad; about the Howlands, the Primes, Robert Lenox, Archibald Gracie, and A. T. Stewart. They came from every clime: Gracie and Lenox from Scotland, Stewart from Ulster, and so many others from Yankee bournes that Washington Irving founded the St. Nicholas Society as a counterpoise to the boastful New England Society. Whatever their origins the oldtime merchants were a race of the strictest probity. Arthur Tappan's employees had to be teetotalers, steady church-attendants, abhorrers of the theatre, and abolitionists; Archibald Gracie's care for his clerks was said to be ten times as strict as Columbia's for its students.

Yet we must decline to rest New York's claim to high distinction upon so material a basis as is afforded by these men, or by the eminent financiers and manufacturers. Moses Taylor, who did so much to finance the Atlantic cable and make Civil War loans a success; Robert M. Hartley, part-founder of the Bowery

Savings Bank; James Gore King, who so largely financed the building of the Erie Railroad and who restored specie payments after the panic of 1837—from these men a striking line runs down to Levi P. Morton, J. P. Morgan, and the other banking giants of a later day. But we do not wish to print too heavily the dollar sign upon Father Knickerbocker's escutcheon. In manufacturing, we can again list impressive names. The Lorillards were notable tobacco manufacturers when the British flag still floated here and tobacco shops were called snuff shops; the Havemeyers embarked early in sugar-refining; Robert Hoe announced in 1825 that he would manufacture printing presses at 64 Pine Street; and the Singer sewing-machine gained worldwide renown from a New York factory. But it would be difficult to maintain the thesis that New York manufacturers attained greater note than those of other cities, and impossible to hold the view that they represented the true greatness of the metropolis.

The New York bar has had a resplendent history, but so has that of Boston, Philadelphia, and other centers. In the field of politics we must frankly acknowledge that a connection with the city has been as much a handicap as an advantage, as the most characteristic and gifted of our New York leaders, Al Smith, found. Nor can it even be said, with truth, that New York has been a dominant center of literary talent and influence. To be sure, for a short time in the era of Irving, Drake, Halleck, and James K. Paulding, Gotham did possess a promising literary atmosphere; but it did not endure. Its literary renown was revived in the days when Greenwich Village nourished an eager band of novelists, poets, and playwrights; when Eugene O'Neill and others, for example, made that part of town the birthplace of the new American drama. These, however, were brief interludes. With one exception the greatest literary names connected with Manhattan have not been of and by the city. William Cullen Bryant's spiritual home was his native New England; Fenimore Cooper's was the forest and the sea; Howells always seemed, like Mark Twain, primarily a Westerner; and, giving up any real claim to Poe, as we must, we are left with Walt Whitman alone.

New York has long been the literary headquarters of America—seldom and but briefly its literary capital.

Indeed, a busy commercial and financial capital is not well adapted to suzerainty in letters. The moneymaking atmosphere is unfavorable to the arts, except as it offers them such implements as libraries and museums—those moneymakers Astor, Lenox, Tilden, and Morgan did well in this respect—and as it furnishes a second-generation leisure. The political atmosphere which enveloped Manhattan from Fernando Wood to Charles Murphy, again, was not the most genial environment for literature. Even poets in their garrets feel the difference between a city ruled by forty high-minded men, and one ruled by forty thieves. The New York *Nation* remarked fifty years ago: "A community which prefers to be governed by liquor sellers in the interest of thieves and panders can hardly be said to deserve a literature. It produces after its kind a yellow press, which answers its literary purposes." This was a little harsh. The *Nation* might have acknowledged that New York had brought forth, or developed, the most gifted line of editors in the country: Greeley, Bryant, Raymond, Dana, Whitelaw Reid, Pulitzer, and (then just emerging) Adolph S. Ochs. But the general stricture was true. And a still larger reason can of course be assigned for New York's failure to hold a place as literary capital. London, Paris, Rome—each is truly the heart of its respective country, knit into its being and largely directing its energies. New York, by contrast, is a little alien from the rest of the United States.

It is elsewhere that we must look for the line of activities and of men that give our city a peculiar distinction. Where? It will help us in our quest if we pause a moment to peer into the special conditions of New York's growth, there to discover if possible the traits which might create a special field of surpassing effort. The subject is of more than curious interest, for it looks to the future. This city, ruled for three and a half centuries by Dutch, British, and Americans, has but begun its career, and its past is doubtless but a short prologue to a mightier future. Increase of wealth, convenience, and beauty seem certain, but what of the

far more important matter of character? In what respect may we hope that this will continue to be a character bearing some rare and precious fruits?

New York, most people are apt to say, has been made what it is by its geographical situation:—Its position on one of the best bays of the long Atlantic coast, midway in early days between the Northern and Southern colonies, and almost equally midway between Europe and the Caribbean islands; a position precisely suited to the establishment of that Triangular Trade which gave the city so much opulence; a position commanding, as the continent became settled, the best river-way northward, and the only easy natural path, free from mountain impediment, to the West. These advantages nursed an enterprise which created many special skills and wisdoms. All the gifts bestowed by geographical situation, however, would have failed to give New York any special breadth or elevation of character but for other factors. From its early generations, the life of the city possessed certain happy qualities.

One of these traits was humaneness of temper. If the old Dutch rule in New Amsterdam was never politically liberal, and often stupid, it was nevertheless kindly. It had a mellowness akin to the suave atmosphere of Leyden and old Amsterdam. When British rule supervened, it necessarily compromised with the sturdy ways of the Dutch burghers. The Englishmen who came in Restoration times, themselves large-minded in reaction against Puritanism, had to make due concession to these Batavian step-children, so like yet so different from the Britons themselves. The consequence was that English rule in New York took on a moderation, a give-and-take spirit of adjustment, not found in some more homogeneous colonies.

A prominent feature of this moderation was the religious affability usually characteristic of both the city and the province. The Dutch had planted their established church. The English brought in a new church, which they gave a weak and limited establishment without harming the original sect; and they wisely made no sustained effort to exclude or irritate other faiths. The

Duke of York was a Catholic; one of the ablest royal governors, Thomas Dongan, was also a Romanist. Those laws inimical to Catholicism later passed, largely because of the French peril, were laxly enforced. The Jews were made welcome. Speaking generally, we may say that in British days no religion was ever long molested and no right of conscience long invaded with the consent of the government. The kindliness and large-mindedness which the Dutch and English bequeathed to the American city were a priceless heritage.

Another special trait in the New York character was derived from the mixture of two strong elements, the landholding interest and the mercantile interest; the one full of strength and solidity, the other of energy and progressiveness. No other American community had such an alliance between the almost feudal conservation of the old age and the dynamic commercial impulses of the new. While the great estate-owners were acting the role of lords of the manor, the merchants were utilizing the most modern methods of accumulating riches. In Boston the trading groups had little social connection with the yeomen farmers. In Virginia the barons of the Potomac paid but condescending attention to the shippers of Norfolk and Baltimore. In New York, however, the commercial and landed families intermarried freely.

Not only this; they learned each other's ways, so that some merchants eagerly bought large estates and presided over their own manors, while numerous landlords energetically adventured in trade. The abuses connected with the great estates were many. Colonial reformers complained angrily; Lord Bellomont at the beginning of the 18th century wished to reduce all properties to a thousand acres or less. Yet the partnership of mercantile and landed groups, maintained with mutual respect, yielded several clear benefits. It gave municipal life a variety and amplitude it might otherwise have lacked; it stimulated the mind of rural areas; it brought about a healthy balance between urban and rural pursuits. It also gave a double check to royal power, for, acting in harmony, these two interests could make an effective stand against the most aggressive governor. Cadwallader

Colden's letters just before the Revolution furnish proof of that. The alliance, finally, provided perhaps the best possible basis for putting capital into commerce, into the encouragement of interior settlement, and into the general growth of city and province or State.

From the union of these two elements sprang the peculiar dependence of New York on the leadership of great families; peculiar in degree if not in kind. Mrs. Martha Lamb in what is still the best history of the city goes so far as to say that at the time of the Revolution New York was simply a nest of families.

The way in which public-spirited leadership became a responsibility of prominent families was often dramatically interesting. In 1673 a Scottish parson's son sailed for America, and next year turned up in Albany. He was poor enough, but he was handsome, well read, master of two languages, and related to the Earls of Linlithgow. In no time this brilliant young Scot was administering the Indian affairs of the province. Within a few years he had bought a parcel of Indian titles, and married the wealthy widow of Nicholas Van Rensselaer, one of the powerful estate-owners. Thus it was that Robert Livingston before his death in 1728 became owner of more than 160,000 acres; and through him British influence first rose to dominance over the old Dutch magnates. Almost at the same time a Huguenot refugee, crossing from England to New York, settled in the city, made a rapid success in trade, and married the daughter of a notable Dutch landholder, thus founding the Delancey line. The rise of such families gave New York more than an aristocratic flavor; it created a tradition of service. The single Livingston shoot presently flowered into a cluster of bright-hued talents: one descendant being a signer of the Declaration of Independence, another the negotiator of the Louisiana Purchase, another a justice of the Federal Supreme Court, and another the author of a long-famous code for the State of Louisiana. The Delancey line similarly gave us a bishop, a chief justice of New York, a notable partisan leader in the Revolution, and (not least of all) the father of the New York turf.

Still another redoubtable trait of the New York character, beyond question, arose from the mingling of many stocks and bloods within its walls: the trait of cosmopolitan tolerance, and something better, delight in cosmopolitan variety. The Dutch, holding the town for a long generation, struck too firm root to be dislodged. The incoming English, Scotch, and Welsh quickly intermixed with them. Yankee Puritans lost no time in seeking the advantages of the thriving port. The Germans were shortly making their contribution, both in that bad fugure Jacob Leisler and that good one John Peter Zenger. From every part of the Old World came human currents, men leaving lands continuously at war to prove in New York that, as David Starr Jordan once said, America "is the land where hate dies away." The city is a fitting site for the United Nations, for it is the most cosmopolitan city on earth. When Bryce wrote that "New York is a European city, of no particular country," he fell short of the mark, for Africa, the West Indies, and South America have made large contributions. Living side by side, the different stocks, despite occasional jars and jealousies, have fixed a standard which measures the worth of human beings, not by prejudice or formula, but by their contribution to the general good.

Kindliness, tolerance, a friendly acceptance of racial and national diversity, a belief in leadership—these are traits given New York by history. It remains to add the last and most important: an understanding of the indispensability of effort on behalf of the poor and unfortunate—of the vital need, in our crowded immigrant center, of humanitarian activity.

In no city of the globe, not London or Paris, probably not even Naples or Cairo, have the juxtapositions of blatant wealth and dire poverty been more dramatic than in New York. From early days every ship from Europe was a ship freighted with want. Every convulsion abroad, from the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the ravages of Louis XIV in the Palatinate to the Terror of Hitler, has brought its frightened indigent throngs to our bay. Every famine has sent us another wave. Just after the Revolution a new almshouse had to be built for what an official

report called "the prodigious influx of indigent foreigners into the city," many of them "destitute and emaciated." Probably nowhere in the world did poverty become a greater challenge. Philip Hone could walk in five minutes from the mansions of Great Jones Street to the hovels along the docks. George Templeton Strong took his daily omnibus journey from comfortable Gramercy Park to his Wall Street office through the stench, misery, and endemic—often epidemic—disease of some of the worst slums this side of Asia. Citizens watched the mob demonstrations of the ragged underfed after the panics of 1837 and 1857 with a sense that a volcano lay under the Manhattan cobblestones. They watched the breadlines and apple-sellers in more recent depressions with the same feeling. From this challenge was born a humanitarian spirit of special energy and richness.

Here it is that we come to the truly golden thread in the history of New York. The traits we have enumerated, applied to the singularly exigent need, gave us a list of philanthropists and reformers, animated by a sensitive civic conscience, that no other city can quite match. The line begins, in our national era, with such men as Dr. Samuel Bard, founder of the New York Hospital which opened its doors in 1791, John Leake, who in 1792 bequeathed a thousand pounds for an annual distribution of sixpenny loaves among the deserving poor, and John Watts, onetime governor of Bard's Hospital and co-founder of the Leake and Watts Orphan House. It grows in vigor with men like Robert B. Minturn, so active in establishing the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and erecting St. Luke's Hospital. It runs down to workers whose form and face are recalled by many now living—to Andrew Haswell Green, Seth Low, Abram S. Hewitt, Jacob Riis, Louisa Lee Schuyler, Lilian D. Wald, and George McAneny; and to worthy successors busy today expanding their activities.

This line is to be distinguished on the one side from political figures, however high-minded, like DeWitt Clinton, John A. Dix, and Samuel J. Tilden, who found their chief fame in other

avenues. It must be distinguished on another side from such philanthropic dispensers of great wealth as D. Ogden Mills, William B. Astor, Andrew Carnegie, Mrs. Russell Sage, William D. Sloane, and Jacob H. Schiff, who had many interests, and who necessarily often gave of money without quite giving themselves. The names on the golden thread are of men and women who devoted their central energies to self-sacrificing labors for the public weal and frequently gave their entire lives to softening the stony face of the city into kindly lines.

The need for such altruists in New York was specially great, to to sure; but then in many communities similar need has been met less vigorously. In our municipality it is the sustained and varied effort that is impressive. John Ruskin, out of his indignation at the imperfect response to the challenge in London, described the kind of imagination required:

> If, suddenly [*wrote Ruskin*], in the midst of the enjoyments of the palate and lightnesses of heart of a London dinner-party, the walls of the chamber were parted, and through their gap the nearest human beings who were famishing and in misery were brought into the midst of the company—feasting and fancy-free—if, pale with sickness, horrible in destitution, broken by despair, body by body, they were laid upon the soft carpet, one beside the chair of every guest, would only the crumbs of the dainties be sent to them?—would only a passing glance, a passing thought, be vouchsafed to them? Yet the actual facts, the real relations of each Dives and Lazarus, are not altered by the intervention of the house-wall between the table and the sickbed—by the few feet of ground (how few!) which are indeed all that separate the merriment from the misery.

Beside Ruskin's noble passage we might lay a simpler paragraph from Jacob Riis:

> Last Christmas a clergyman who has a housefull of children asked me if I could not find for them a poor family of the city with children of about the same ages, whom they might visit and befriend. He worked every day in the office of a foreign mission in Fifth Avenue, and knew little of the life that moved about him in the city. I picked out a Hungarian widow in an East Side tenement, whose brave struggle to keep her little flock together had enlisted my sympathy and strong admiration. She was a cleaner in an office building; and not until all the arrangements had been made did it occur to me to ask where. Then it turned out that

she was scrubbing floors in the missionary society's house, right at my friend's door. They had passed each other every day, each in need of the other, and each as far from the other as if oceans separated them instead of a doorstep four inches wide.

Our golden line of New Yorkers had the imagination, diligence, and self-forgetting zeal to perceive that the city had to be lifted in its entirety or not at all. The boldest student would not undertake to list the most eminent persons in the roster, for in this sphere some of the greatest, shunning notice, remain little known. Some names, however, at once rise to our minds. William E. Dodge, at one time or another an officer of almost every benevolent society in the city; Peter Cooper, the simple-hearted promoter of adult education, who made his Union a symbol of the best aspirations of the toiling masses; Jackson Schultz, the leather merchant who led the Citizens' Association just after the Civil War in meeting problems of sanitation that had to be conquered despite the appalling handicap of Tweed Ring government; Charles Loring Brace, who became the protector of defenceless children when street Arabs were numbered in thousands; beside him the angular but unvanquishable reformer Henry A. Bergh, who, finding that the law protected dumb beasts but not waifs, brought a maltreated child into the courtroom in a blanket, claimed protection for her as an animal, and went on to found the Society for the Protection of Children; Stanton Coit, who in 1886, one year after Toynbee Hall was established in London, brought the social settlement to New York by founding the Neighborhood Guild; Alfred T. White, Brooklyn pioneer in housing reform and builder of the first model tenements.

Other names, equally distinguished, come with and after them: Jacob Riis, who proved that New York had *its* submerged tenth, a tenth so impoverished that it ended in the nameless gulf of potter's field; Richard Watson Gilder, never too busy with his magazine and his poetry to be a good citizen, who as head of the tenement house commission of 1894 helped write an epochal housing code; George William Curtis, another editor always battling for better government; Josephine Shaw Lowell, who

from the Charity Organization Society went on to fight for better care of the city insane, and from that to the defense of New York working-women, and thence to the improvement of labor conditions in general; Henry Codman Potter, who made Grace Church a luminous centre of social work, and demonstrated that "the best argument for religion is six feet of Christianity"; Dr. Stephen Smith, who did so much to make the best results of medical science available to the poor, and Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi, a fervent worker in the same cause; Mrs. Maude Nathan, who developed the Consumers League as a bulwark of decent wages, hours, and quarters for women wage-earners; Mrs. William H. Osborn, chief agent in creating at Bellevue the first nurses' training school in America; Robert Fulton Cutting, of old New York lineage, who gave his time to a great variety of ameliorative undertakings. Thus we come down to names already noted—Andrew H. Green, Seth Low, Abram S. Hewitt. The line goes steadily on, and among those most active today would have to be named several prominent Negroes. These men and women never believed with Tennyson's Northern Farmer that "the poor in a loomp is bad"; they believed in the infinite worth of every human soul.

This, to my mind, is the most lustrous honor roll in the history of New York. No other city can point to a list of proportionate length or with so many remarkable names; and most American municipalities have taken lessons from New York. The lives of these men and women shed a special benediction upon New York. It was they who were most missed when they passed away. "New York seems lonely without Mr. Hewitt," said Seth Low in 1903. When Josephine Shaw Lowell died three years later Felix Adler wrote: "New York seems to me to be a less noble city to live in, now that I can no longer associate it with the presence of this noble woman." Some names have less fame than they deserve. The world knows of but one Theodore Roosevelt, for example; but New York ought not to forget the elder bearer of the name, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. When he died in 1878 at forty-six, E. L. Godkin declared that the city had suffered an

almost irreparable loss, for his multifarious activities made him a model citizen:

> Ever since 1865 [*wrote Godkin*] he has been a leading aid of all the best charities in the city. The Children's Aid Society had no more liberal friend and faithful worker, and it is safe to say that there is hardly an organization for the promotion of any great public interest, philanthropic, or artistic, or scientific, for which he has not labored diligently and energetically, paying both with his purse and person without stint. His success in raising money for public purposes was very remarkable—we remember hearing one gentleman say, half jocosely, that Mr. Roosevelt's absence on a short European trip would save him $1,000—and of course it would not have been possible if he had not himself been ready to head every list handsomely. . . . He brought into his service for the public a soundness of judgment and a freedom from illusions which to many enterprises were of inestimable value, but which never cooled in the least his own hope or courage.

Godkin added a sentence which might have been applied equally to Stanton Coit, Andrew H. Green, Seth Low, Jacob Riis, and George McAneny:

> We believe the mere fact that New York could even in these later years produce him, and hold his love and devotion, has been to hundreds of those who knew him and watched his career a reason for not despairing of the future of the city.

It is obvious that the people we have named fall into two main groups: one, comprising William R. Grace, G. W. Curtis, Seth Low, Hewitt, and their like, intent on defending or restoring the framework of decent city administration; the other, comprising C. L. Brace, Riis, Mrs. Lowell, Dr. Stephen Smith, Mrs. Maud Nathan, and many more, anxious to create or expand ameliorative agencies within that framework. But the two groups constantly collaborated. This golden thread in the city's record shines the brighter because New York life has always been so largely materialistic and has so often been controlled by political gangsters. It was refreshing a generation ago to turn from the glitter of Fifth Avenue, many of its palaces inhabited by men who had piled up their riches more greedily than scrupulously, to servants of the poor who made every penny of their meagre resources count. It was refreshing to turn from Boss John Kelly and Boss

Richard Croker to such leaders as Mayors Grace, Hewitt, and Seth Low, each a philanthropist as well as a public servant. George William Curtis wrote that he went into city affairs "at a time when politics seemed particularly mean and selfish and corrupt, when there was a vague general apprehension that the very moral foundations of the national character were loosened." The figures of our line gave reassurance that the foundations were sound.

This roster did not represent mere benevolent impulse and unthinking sympathy. All its members stood at the opposite pole from sloppy emotionalism; they were hardheaded planners and stout battlers. They knew that to promote social action meant fighting anti-social activities which were well financed and ably organized. It takes brains and tenacity to serve the public weal when great cohorts of men have a large stake in injuring the public weal. An example was furnished by William E. Dodge, who put the same tough-minded realism into his benefactions as into his metal business. Still more impressively, it was furnished by his granddaughter Grace H. Dodge, who inherited his business capacity and used it in making small seeds grow into large plants. She first threw herself into the working girls' club movement; when her shrewd planning made it a success, she brought forth from it the Industrial Education Association; when work and foresight made that also a success, she and Nicholas Murray Butler evolved from it the New York College for the Training of Teachers; and her keen mind and tireless hand kept Teachers College alive in its earliest and hardest years. Her business gifts made the American Social Hygiene Association, organized at her house, influential, and the New York Travelers Aid Society, which she helped to found, a vigorous body.

Fighting and planning, with these devoted folk, went hand in hand. Jacob Riis aptly called one of his heartfelt volumes "A Ten Years' War," with the subtitle "The Battle With the Slums." In his campaigns he was animated by much the same spirit as General William Booth, who put his workers into army uniforms with drum and fife. Among these men and women were

our truest planners for the new age. Paper schemes for Utopias will never work. It is easy to build them with gingerbread battlements, streets paved with candy, and fountains spouting chocolate milk-shakes; but everything made without thorough planning fades away. Indeed, mere sentimentalism defeats its own aims. "Every shilling I give to the poor," lamented a famous London social worker, "does fourpence worth of good by helping to keep their miserable bodies alive, and eightpence worth of harm by helping to destroy their miserable souls." It was hard-headed, persistent effort which, at the hands of Riis and Hewitt, finally made the Small Parks movement a success—"Everything takes just ten years," said Hewitt as he opened the first park; which at the hands of Nathan Straus made the pure milk movement so useful; and which at the hands of Lillian Wald made the Henry Street Settlement and its visiting nurses invaluable.

As the battle goes on, we can see that in some ways it is made easier by the acceptance of social welfare measures as part of the pattern of government in America. In other respects, unhappily, it remains as difficult and dangerous as ever. Into New York have poured the underprivileged Negroes of the South, the distressed surplus of Puerto Rico's population, and the harried refugees of half Europe; we need but walk through the streets of Harlem to see how raw and festering are some social sores that still deface our civilization. For the political corruption and waste of the last century we pay a high price; we have thrown away resources desperately needed for health, housing, and education. Fortunately, the men and women named have created a tradition which will continue potent. Cassius said of Rome: "We have lost the breed of noble blood"—but even in our darkest days that could never be said of New York. We *have* the breed of noble blood. Henry Hudson, aloft on his pedestal over Riverdale, sometimes sees the smoke and murk throw a pall across the city, hiding it in a dingy cloud; then again he sees the skies brighten, the cleansing breezes blow, the river turn into a path of silver, and houses, towers, and temples, under an effulgent sun, flash like a city of gold, magical with promise for the future.

THE KING'S COLLEGE BUILDING

WITH SOME NOTES ON ITS LATER TENANTS

by MILTON HALSEY THOMAS*

FOR ALMOST a full century the edifice built in 1756-1760 for the College of the Province of New-York was one of the landmarks of Manhattan. When it was first erected the building occupied a magnificent site: it was on flat ground on the east bank of the Hudson at the top of a gentle slope extending a hundred and fifty yards down to the "road to Greenwich" (now Greenwich Street) which ran along the shore at the high water mark. The Reverend Andrew Burnaby, an English visitor, thought it would be, when finished, "the most beautifully situ-

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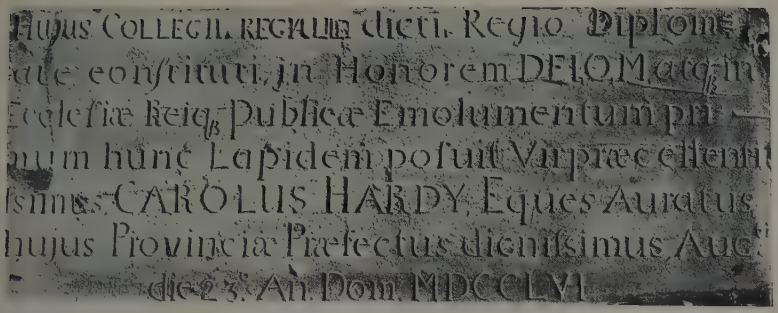
NOTE: The illustration above, representing "King's College from the Hudson River, 1760," was painted by Edward Punnett Chrystie for the Columbia Bicentennial.

ated of any college, I believe, in the world." Writing a dozen years later, President Myles Cooper described the college as:

> commanding from the eminence on which it stands, a most extensive and beautiful prospect of the opposite shore and country of New Jersey, the City and Island of New York, Long Island, Staten Island, New York Bay with its islands, the Narrows, forming the mouth of the Harbour, etc., etc.; and being totally unencumbered by any adjacent buildings, and admitting the purest circulation of air from the river, and every other quarter, has the benefit of as agreeable and healthy a situation as can possibly be conceived.

Before the building, venerable then as the home of Columbia College, fell into the hands of wreckers in 1857, it was surrounded and dwarfed by commercial structures. Three blocks of warehouses and a row of docks intervened between the college and the river, the little campus—College Green—had lost forever the "still air of delightful studies," and even as warm-hearted a graduate as George Templeton Strong could find no words of sentiment for it.

On the 23d of August 1756 the inhabitants of New York City saw an academic procession for the first time. Shortly after midday Lieutenant Governor James De Lancey, Leonard Cutting the tutor, the distinguished citizens who composed the corporation of the new college, and the students, numbering about a dozen, met at the public house of Edward Willett (the Province Arms Tavern, 115 Broadway) and proceeded to Adam Van Den Berg's Mead House and Garden at the Common (afterward City Hall Park); there they were joined by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Hardy, in his chariot, and the procession moved westward to the college grounds. Sir Charles laid the cornerstone, and "a Health was drank to his Majesty, and success to his Arms, and to Sir Charles, and Prosperity to the College, and to the Advancement of true Religion, Loyalty and Learning, under his Administration." The Reverend Dr. Samuel Johnson, president of the college, made a short congratulatory speech in Latin. The governors, the pupils, and several other gentlemen laid their own stones, then they returned to Mr. Willett's, "where there was a very elegant Dinner, after which all the


Hujus Collegii Regalis dicti Regio Diplomate
ade constituti in Honorem DEI O.M. ac in
Ecclesiæ Reiq. Publicæ Emolumentum pri
mum hunc Lapidem posuit Vir præcellentis
simus CAROLUS HARDY Eques Auratus
hujus Provinciæ Præfectus dignissimus Auc
die 23 An Dom MDCCLVI

CORNERSTONE OF KING'S COLLEGE

Laid 23 August 1756 by Sir Charles Hardy. Recovered in May 1857 when the building was being razed, and set on the inside of the east wall of the chapel room at 49th Street. Removed to the fireplace mantel of the Trustees Room, Low Memorial Library, Morningside, in 1897. Apparently there was some confusion as to the Latin rendering of the college name, REGNUM being carved first, then altered to REGALIS.

Photographed 1954 by Fritz Goro of LIFE Magazine

usual Healths were drank, and Prosperity to the College; and the whole was conducted with the utmost Decency and Propriety."[1] That the college had come along this far was an occasion for much rejoicing by those present, considering the disappointments and frustrations that had already been encountered.

New York's first college, in common with many another American institution, had its origin in a series of public lotteries. The Dutch of New Amsterdam had given no discoverable attention to higher education, and the English of the next few generations here did not rush precipitately into any provision for it. By the middle of the eighteenth century, after the Great Awakening had made itself felt throughout New England and to the southward, a new enthusiasm for the improvement of educational facilities seemed to stir the Middle Colonies, and one result was the almost simultaneous establishment of colleges in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. In the same year that a charter was granted for the College of New Jersey (1746),

[1] *New-York Gazette*, 30 August 1754; Samuel Johnson, *Career and Writings* (New York: 1929), IV, 229–230.

the provincial Assembly authorized a lottery for the founding of a college in New York. By 1751 some £3443 had been raised, and the money was vested by the Assembly in a group of trustees who were authorized to receive proposals from any of the cities or counties in the colony desirous of having the college located within their borders. In 1752 the corporation of Trinity Church voted unanimously to give part of its King's Farm property, without conditions, as a site for the college.[2]

The local Anglicans and Presbyterians, however, had been battling, or at least sniping at each other, for a long time. The Anglicans regarded Yale College as a "nursery of sedition" and had protested vigorously when the College of New Jersey was chartered under Presbyterian auspices. The Presbyterians, long fearful that the Anglicans were trying to set up an Established Church "to subjugate and oppress their fellow subjects," naturally looked with a jaundiced eye on a church-controlled college for New York, and suspected ulterior motives in the Trinity offer. William Livingston (Yale 1741), one of the lottery trustees, a liberal, and a vigorous anti-Anglican, thereupon launched, with two other Elis, John Morin Scott (1746) and William Smith, Jr. (1745), a weekly essay-journal, *The Independent Reflector*, to air these topics. Their outspoken essays touched off a religious and political controversy that was carried on with much heat for several years and very nearly resulted in the undoing of the college. There is no space here to review the details of the controversy.[3] It is sufficient to record that after many months of wrangling and political maneuvering, during

[2] The earliest mention of a proposed New York college occurred in the first years of the century when Trinity was seeking a grant by the Crown of the thirty-two-acre tract west of Broadway then known as the Queen's Farm. Colonel Lewis Morris, writing to the secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in support of the application, had said: "N. York is the Center of English America & a Proper Place for a College." (Undated letter in S.P.G. Archives, Letters Received, I [1702–1704], 171). Queen Anne's patent, conveying the Crown land to Trinity, was signed by Lord Cornbury, 23 November 1705.

[3] The extensive literature of the affair has been recorded fully by Dr. Beverly McAnear in *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, XLIV (1950), 301–339. Dr. Milton Martin Klein has given the college controversy exhaustive, scholarly, and readable treatment in his recent unpublished Columbia dissertation, "The American Whig: William Livingston of New York" (1954).

which time Trinity modified its offer and imposed two absolute conditions—that the president must be an Anglican and that the Church of England liturgy must be used in the morning and evening services of the college forever—a royal charter was approved by the executive council on 31 October 1754, establishing The College of the Province of New-York in the City of New-York in America.[4]

In November 1753 the lottery trustees had elected a president, the Reverend Samuel Johnson, D.D. (Oxon.), Yale graduate of 1714 and missionary to the Anglicans in Stratford, Connecticut. By spring the prospects of a charter appeared sufficiently favorable, and Dr. Johnson took half the first page of both the *New-York Mercury* and the *New-York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy* of 3 June 1754 for an "Advertisement—To such Parents as have now (or expect to have) Children prepared to be educated in the COLLEGE of NEW-YORK."

On 1 July another notice signed by Samuel Johnson appeared "to acquaint whom it may concern that I shall attend at the Vestry Room in the School House, near the English Church, on Tuesdays and Thursdays every week, between the Hours of Nine and Twelve, to examine such as offer themselves to be admitted into the College." Eight freshmen were admitted, and on the 17th of July Dr. Johnson began instruction in the vestry-room of the schoolhouse on Rector Street which was to serve as the home of the college for six years.

Despite Johnson's brave gesture and the existence of the charter, the college was by no means securely launched as 1754 ended. Livingston had begun to print another series of essays,

[4] This was the corporate name of the institution. The charter provided that as soon as the Trinity lands had been conveyed, "there be erected and made on the said Lands, a COLLEGE, and other Buildings and Improvements, for the Use and Conveniency of the same; which shall be called and known by the Name of KING'S COLLEGE" (*The Charter of the College of New-York, in America*, New York, 1754, p. 4). Although the name "King's College" was given to the building only, it soon became the name by which the institution was known. The seal, which certainly should have borne the corporate name, was adopted in May 1755 with the legend COLLEGII.REG.NOV.EBOR. As early as 25 March 1761 the scribe wrote of a meeting of the "Governors of King's College" in the corporation minutes, and from 4 November 1768 the name appears that way uniformly in the records.

TRINITY CHURCH AND SCHOOLHOUSE, 1754

Drawn by Edward Punnett Chrystie, 1953

This carefully documented sketch, made for the Columbia Bicentennial, shows the first home of King's College with Dr. Johnson and his eight students as they probably appeared on the morning of the first class meeting, 17 July 1754. The original Trinity Church (1698) is at the left, facing the Hudson; in the background is the Lutheran Church and its parsonage on Broadway; across Rector Street (then called Robinson Street) is the English Charity Schoolhouse (built 1748, burned 25 February 1749/50, rebuilt 1751) in which King's College was housed until 1760. All the buildings shown were destroyed in the fire of 20–21 September 1776.

Columbiana Collection, Columbia University

called "The Watch Tower," and had had a bill introduced in the Assembly for the incorporation of a public college (he called it the "free college") with a board of trustees to be appointed by the Legislature; it was to be protestant, but no particular denomination was to be permitted to gain ascendancy. A furious battle followed in the Assembly and as a result, the 1754 charter never received legislative approval, its delivery to the governors was held up for many months, and the college finally had to settle for half the money raised by the lotteries. The other half (by

then £3282.0.8) went to the city corporation for the erection of a jail and pest-house.

On the 7th of May 1755 the governors of the college met for the first time. Deputy Secretary Goldsbrow Banyar attended with His Majesty's charter. Lieutenant Governor James DeLancey addressed the gentlemen named in the charter and delivered the document to them. Judge Horsmanden then proceeded to qualify the governors by administering the required oaths. The governors met again on 13 May at what they called their "first Annual Meeting"; at this time they received instruments of lease and re-lease from the "Rector and Inhabitants of the City of New-York in Communion of the Church of England as by Law established," dated 12 and 13 May, conveying to them for the college campus the parcel of land:

> on the West side of the Broadway in the West Ward of the City of New York fronting easterly to Church Street between Barclay Street and Murray Street four hundred and forty foot and from thence runing Westerly between and along said Barclay Street and Murray Street to the North River and also the use of a Street called Robinson Street from the Middle of the said Land easterly to the Broadway of Ninty foot in breadth. . . .

This was open country at that time, and except for Broadway, the streets existed only on maps.

A committee was appointed at the same meeting to consider the ways and means of erecting suitable edifices for the college, and they reported in June that a plan should be made of the ground and for appropriate buildings; however, since the lottery money was not in hand and the prospects of getting it were still dubious, the recommendation was a cautious one. The governors had evidently considered going ahead without the public funds, for the committee proposed that a subscription be set on foot in the city, that the Archbishop of Canterbury and others in England be solicited, and that subscription papers be launched in the West Indies.[5]

[5] One of these subscription lists, a long parchment, still survives, and it is an exceedingly interesting document. It is dated July 1755, but most of the subscriptions were not secured until after Sir Charles Hardy's large gift in November. "The Founders," as Dr. Johnson called them, *i.e.*, the governors named in the charter, each

Another step was taken 16 September 1755 when a committee was named to employ a surveyor to stake out the ground "and to enclose such part of it as they shall think proper for Storing materials and building a Lime House and to purchase a Quantity of Lime, Stone and boards and such other materials as they shall think necessary for building the College;" that committee was empowered in November to sink a well for the use of the college.

The arrival of Sir Charles Hardy as provincial governor in September was a fortunate circumstance for the college. In November the corporation prepared a congratulatory address soliciting his protection and patronage. He replied that they could be assured of his "Countenance and Protection," which was important aid in the political tussle still going on; much more important was his personal gift of £500.

The building project got under way again in the spring of 1756. In April there was a new committee named "to get a plan perfected for a College and Prepare an Estimate of the Expense [of] the Thickness of the Walls largeness of the Rooms number of Casements &c." When the governors assembled 12 May they had several plans laid before them. The intention was to build a long U-shaped building open to the south; the "North Side" or main portion, running east and west, was to be built first, and the wings added when necessary. The governors could not agree on any of the plans, so they "Resolved that Mr Cromelin (who is present) [this was Robert Crommelin, the builder, who also designed St. George's Chapel] be desired to draw another plan of one hundred and eighty feet in length and thirty feet in breadth."[6] When these plans were completed, Dr. Johnson and

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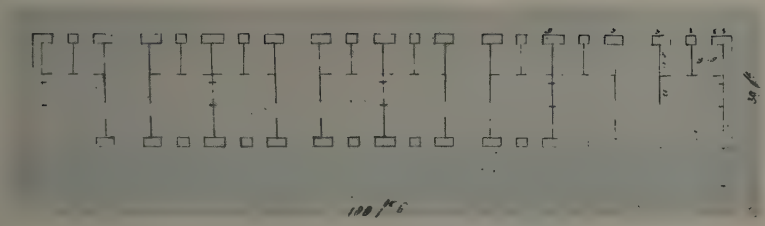
subscribed from £50 to £200. General William Shirley, governor of Massachusetts-Bay and commander in chief of H.M. forces in British North America, gave £100. Several New York women gave considerable sums in their own names. Unfortunately the list has been damaged by dampness and mould and many names and amounts cannot be read; however, by adding up what remains legible, and counting the £500 gift from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, it appears that almost £3000 was subscribed.

[6] Nassau Hall at Princeton, often called the largest single building of its time in the colonies, was nearing completion as King's College was begun. It was built of local brownstone, 176¾ by 50 feet, with a large central pedimented pavilion; the basement storey was so tall that early engravings show the building as four storeys high.



FLOOR PLAN OF THE COLLEGE BUILDING

Undated, but probably one of the plans shown to the college governors in May 1756.

Columbiana Collection, Columbia University

other members of the board were to wait on Sir Charles Hardy with them and secure his approbation. The governors met again 13 July. Dr. Johnson reported that His Excellency had approved the plan now produced; the board then agreed upon it, stirred up the committee appointed the previous September to purchase building materials, and directed them to "agree with Workmen and to Carry on and Compleat the Foundation agreeable to the abovesaid plan and that they leave a Vacancy between the Main Street [*i.e.*, what is now Park Place] & the front of the College as large as they shall think Convenient not less then sixty and not exceeding Eighty feet." From this time the construction of the college went forward actively.

Judge Chambers announced to the governors at their meeting of 16 December 1756 that the Assembly had finally passed a bill appropriating the lottery funds in equal parts to the city and to the college, thus putting an end to the long "college controversy." The following February, committees from both corporations met and agreed upon a division of the bonds and mortgages in which the funds had been invested. The same month the governors voted that "the College be built of Gray Stone."[7] Only one further decision was needed from the

[7] Professor Ralph J. Holmes of the Columbia Geology Department has identified the cornerstone—the only surviving portion of the fabric of King's College—as Triassic sandstone from New Jersey, probably from the old quarries near New Ark. The timber came from Elizabeth Town.

governors: on 21 March 1759 they were shown plans of the building with and without a cupola, and unanimously resolved on the plan with the cupola.

A SOUTHEAST VIEW OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK [*c.* 1763]

"Drawn on the Spot [probably in 1763 from what is now the corner of Varick and Beach Streets] by Capt Thomas Howdell, of the Royal Artillery. Engraved by. P. Canot. . . . Published according to Act of Parliament by Tho Jefferys at Charing Cross" in *Scenographia Americana or a Collection of Views of North America and the West Indies* . . . London, 1768. "New College" is in the center with Trinity Church just beyond, the Hudson at the right, and Staten Island in the distance.

Copy at The New-York Historical Society

Dr. Johnson, who lived in great fear of the smallpox, was driven away from the city in October 1759 and remained at Stratford until May 1760; when he returned, the college building was so far completed that he was able to move his family in and set up housekeeping. In the same month the officers and students "began to Lodge and Diet in it." Johnson wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury in July: "Our House, all at present intended, is now near finished, and is a very neat and commodious building 180 feet in length by 30, 3 Stories, in a very delightful Situation near Hudson's River opening to the Harbour. . . ." The commencement of 1760 was held the 26th of June:

In the Morning the College Hall was opened with a short and elegant

Latin Speech by the Reverend President; from whence the Students and Candidates dressed in their Gowns, and uncovered, proceeded to St. George's Chapel, followed by the Governors of the College and other Gentlemen.[8]

KING'S COLLEGE ABOUT 1763

Detail from the so-called "Palm tree print" (reproduced opposite)—the only extant view of the college made during the colonial period. The steeple showing at the left is that of the Presbyterian Church on Wall Street; the one behind the college on the right is Trinity's. For a full description of this view and its companion, "A South West View," as well as of the entire *Scenographia Americana* (1761–1781) in which both were published, see Stokes' *Iconography*, I, 279–296.

From the print in Columbiana, Columbia University

Following the exercises the governors held a large dinner in the college hall. More than thirty years later the amount spent for the King's College building was remembered and recorded in an estimate of the wants of the college; the minutes of 5 March 1792 carry the statement: "The present Wing of the Building cost £11000."

The next dozen years and more were years of peaceful progress for King's College. A steward was appointed and given rooms and a kitchen in the college and a portion of the garden; he was to keep the students' rooms clean and their beds made, and to provide meals. The governors ordered that the resident

[8] *New-York Mercury*, 30 June 1760.

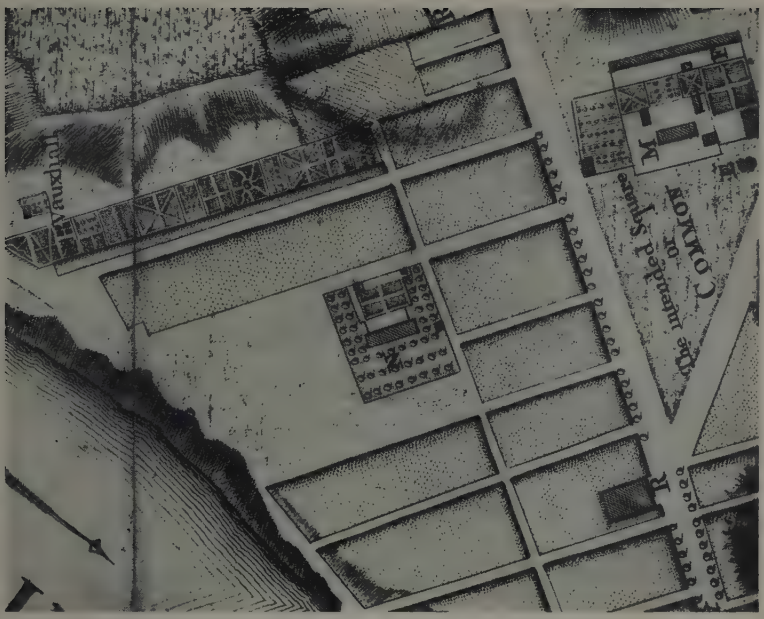
students "Breakfast Dine and Sup together in the College Hall but that they be allowed no meat at their Suppers"; the weekly rate for the three meals was fixed at 11 shillings. Room rent was fixed at £4 per annum and tuition at £5. A "Fence of Posts and Rails" was ordered to enclose the college grounds, and by 1765 there had been erected a "Porter's Lodge at the Easterly Gate of the College Court"; rules were drawn up governing the hours of ingress and egress of the students. Trees were set out. Fire buckets were purchased for the rooms, the president was charged with the duty of having the chimneys swept whenever necessary, and 8 May 1764 it was ordered that "a Conductor be fixed to the Cupulo of the College as a Security against Lightning."[9]

Coincident with the resignation of Dr. Johnson as president in March 1763 and the arrival from Oxford of Reverend Myles Cooper, M.A., a twenty-six-year-old bachelor who was made president the following month, a committee of the governors reported on the inconvenience that had attended the practice of permitting whole families to reside in the college, and the board resolved that "no Women on any pretence whatever (Except a Cook) be allowed to reside within the College for the Future, and that those who are now there be removed as conveniently as may be."

Application had been made by the college to the Common Council as early as 1767 for the water lots fronting their property; in May 1770 the Council voted to give them to the college free of quit-rent. In due time this action doubled the area of the college property, extending it as far as the present West Street.

King's College had grown and flourished under Cooper's presidency, and was attracting students from the West Indies and other distant colonies. No surprise was occasioned, therefore, when Colonel George Washington, the wealthy planter of

[9] This was the second lightning-rod to be erected in the city; one had already been put up on the Middle Dutch Church. Franklin's first account of his invention had appeared late in 1752, but what was thought to be impious interference with divine agency was condemned by theologians in America and abroad, and many decades passed before lightning-rods were generally used. See Andrew D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (New York: 1896), I, 364ff., and Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (New York: 1938), 164ff.



THE COLLEGE AND ITS ENVIRONS 1765–66

Section of "A Plan of the City of New-York . . ." engraved by P. Andrews, from a survey made by Capt. John Montresor, engineer, in the winter of 1765–66 for General Thomas Gage, commander in chief of H.M. forces in North America. The college is shown surrounded by a high fence and neat rows of trees, with garden and outbuildings at the rear, and the original porter's lodge at the gate. The college property sloped unobstructed to the river's edge. Vauxhall Garden was nearby.

1775 edition, Columbiana, Columbia University

Fairfax County, Virginia, turned up in the summer of 1773 to enroll his stepson John Parke Custis at the college. Custis was lonesome and lovelorn in New York, however, and, after only four months here, withdrew, went back to Virginia, and married, but in a letter to his mother dated from King's College, 5 July 1773, he set down the best description of college quarters and life which has survived:

It is now time to give you a short plan of my apartments, & of my way of lifing. I have a large parlour with two Studys or closets, each large enough, to contain a bed, trunk, & couple of chairs, one I sleep in, & the other Joe calls his, my chamber & parlour are paper'd, with a cheap tho very pretty Paper, the other is painted; my furniture consists of six chairs

2 Tables, with a few paultry Pictures; I have an excellent Bed, & in short every thing very convenient & clever. I generally get up about Six or a Little after, dress myself & go to chappel, by the time that Prayers are over, Joe has me a little Breakfast, to which I sit down very contentedly, & after eating heartyly, I thank God, – go to my Studys, with which I am employ'd till twelve than I take a walk & return about one dine with the Professors, & after dinner study till Six at which time, the Bell always [rings] for Prayers they being over College is broak up, & then we take what Amusement we please.[10]

Patrick McRobert, a Scotsman who visited King's shortly afterward, left an account which informs us that Robinson Street had been built up by this time and suggests that a serious problem had been created for the college disciplinary officials:

The college, tho' only one third of the plan is compleat, makes a fine appearance, on one of the finest situations perhaps of any college in the world. Here are taught divinity, mathematicks, the practice and theory of medicine, chymistry, surgery, and materia medica. One circumstance I think is a little unlucky, the enterance to this college is thro' one of the streets where the most noted prostitutes live. This is certainly a temptation to the youth that have occasion to pass so often that way.[11]

The halcyon days of Cooper's diminutive Oxford on the bank of the Hudson, with some two-dozen lads in gowns pursuing the liberal arts, and half a dozen more studying medicine, make an attractive picture, but it was soon to be brutally swept away, and the American Revolution almost put an end to the College of New-York forever. So many of the graduates played important parts on the Continental side in the war and in the establishment of the new nation that it is not easy to think of the college as a hotbed of Toryism. But a majority of the officers and students were loyalist, and the boldest and most outspoken of all was President Myles Cooper, D.C.L., beef-eating Englishman, Oxonian, Churchman, aristocrat, poet, and pamphleteer. He had tangled in the classroom with one of his brightest and most re-

[10] S. M. Hamilton, ed., *Letters to Washington, and Accompanying Papers* (Boston: 1898–1902), IV, 232–235. "Joe" is assumed to be a body-servant brought up from the Mount Vernon menage.

[11] Patrick McRobert, *Tour Through Part of the North Provinces of America in 1774 and 1775* (Edinburgh: 1776), as reprinted in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, April 1935, LIX, 139–140.

spected students, Alexander Hamilton, but it was the pamphlets attributed to him which were his undoing, rousing and infuriating the Sons of Liberty.

Within a week of the Battle of Lexington a very menacing letter appeared in New York. It was dated "Philadelphia, April 25th, 1775," addressed "To Messieurs Delancy, White, Colden, Watts, and Cooper, of New-York," and signed "Three Millions." It laid at their door the hostile preparations against the American colonies because of their assurances of the defection of New York; it blamed them for the defeat of Congressional reconciliation with Britain, and rising in pitch, blamed them for "all the calamities of Towns in flames, a desolated Country, butchered fathers, and weeping widows and children." Cooper must have snorted as he read:

> Executions of villains in effigy will now no longer gratify their resentment. The blood of your unfortunate British and American fellow-subjects, who have already fallen in Massachusetts-Bay calls to Heaven for vengeance against you. The injury you have done to your country cannot admit of a reparation. Fly for your lives, or anticipate your doom by becoming your own executioners.[12]

The president took refuge immediately on the British frigate *Kingfisher* in the harbor, remaining there until things cooled off.

On the night of 10 May 1775[13] a mob of about four hundred indignant patriots marched on King's College, broke open the gate, and forcibly entered the building in search of the president. As Lieutenant Governor Colden reported the incident, the "Mob . . . would certainly have committed the most violent abuse upon him if he had not happily saved himself by Flight."[14]

The story that Alexander Hamilton kept the mob at bay at the college gate, haranguing them on the impropriety of their conduct, while another student warned Cooper, deserves to be true, whether it happened or not, but it lacks contemporary docu-

[12] *American Archives*, 4th ser., II, col. 389.

[13] At daybreak on May 10th Ethan Allen had captured the fortress and garrison at Ticonderoga; later in the day the Second Continental Congress had begun its sessions in Philadelphia.

[14] Cadwallader Colden to the Earl of Dartmouth, New York, 7 June 1775. *N.Y. Col. Docs.*, VIII, 581.

STANZAS *written on the Evening of the 10th of* May, 1776. *By an Exile from* America.

TO thee, O God, by whom I live
The tribute of my ſoul to give,
On this revolving day;
To thee, O God, my voice I raiſe,
To thee addreſs my grateful praiſe,
And ſwell the duteous lay?

Now has this orb unceaſing run
Its annual circuit round the ſun,
Since when the heirs of ſtrife,
Led by the pale moon's midnight ray,
And bent on miſchief, urg'd their way
To ſeize my guiltleſs life.

At eaſe my weary limbs were laid,
And ſlumbers ſweet around me ſhed
The bleſſings of repoſe:
Unconſcious of the dark deſign,
I knew no baſe intent was mine,
And therefore fear'd no foes.

When ſtraight, an heaven-directed youth,
Whom oft my leſſons led to truth,
And honour's ſacred ſhrine,
Advancing quick before the reſt,
With trembling tongue my ear addreſt,
Yet ſure in voice divine.

"Awake! awake! the ſtorm is nigh,—
"This inſtant riſe,—this inſtant fly,—
"The next may be too late:
"Four hundred men, a murderous band,
"Acceſs, importunate, demand,
"And ſhake the groaning gate."

I wake—I fly,—whilſt, loud and near,
Dread execrations wound my ear,
And ſore my ſoul diſmay:
One avenue alone remained,—
A ſpeedy paſſage there I gained,
And winged my rapid way.

That moment, all the furious throng,
An entrance forcing, poured along,
And filled my peaceful cell;
Where harmleſs jeſt, and modeſt mirth,
And cheerful laughter, oft had birth,
And joy was wont to dwell.

Nor yet the Muſes hallowed fane *
Their lawleſs fury can reſtrain;
Or check their headlong rage:
They puſh them from their ſolemn ſeats,
Profane their long-revered retreats,
And lay their Pindus waſte.

Nor yet content,—but hoping ſtill
Their impious purpoſe to fulfil,
They force each yielding door;
And whilſt their curſes load my head,
With piercing ſteel they probe the bed,
And thirſt for human gore.—

Mean while, along the ſounding ſhore,
Where Hudſon's waves inceſſant roar,
I work my weary way;
And ſkirt the windings of the tide,
My faithful pupil by my ſide,
Nor wiſh the approach of day.

At length aſcending from the beach,
With hopes revived, by morn I reach
The good Palemon's cot;
Where, free from terror and affright,
I calmly wait the coming night,
My every fear forgot.—

'Twas then I ſcaled the veſſel's † ſide,
Where all the amities abide,
That mortal worth can boaſt;
Whence, with a longing, lingering view,
I bade my much-lov'd YORK adieu,
And ſought my native coaſt.—

Now, all-compoſed, from danger far,
I hear no more the din of war,
Nor ſhudder at alarms;
But ſafely ſink each night to reſt,
No MALICE rankling through my breaſt,
In FREEDOM'S foſtering arms.—

Though ſtripped of moſt the world admires,
Yet torn by few untamed deſires,
I reſt in calm content;
And humbly hope a gracious Lord
Again thoſe bleſſings will afford,
Which once his bounty LENT.

Yet ſtill, for many a faithful friend,
Shall, day by day, my vows aſcend
Thy dwelling, O my God!
Who, ſteady ſtill in VIRTUE'S cauſe,
Deſpiſing FACTION'S mimic laws,
The paths of PEACE have trod.

Nor yet for FRIENDS alone,—for ALL,
Too prone to heed SEDITION'S call,
Hear me, indulgent Heaven!
"O, may they caſt their arms away,
"To THEE and GEORGE ſubmiſſion pay,
"Repent, and be forgiven!"

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* An elegant edifice, &c, ſince converted into common barracks.

† King-ſiſher,—Capt. James Montagu.

MYLES COOPER'S POETICAL ACCOUNT OF HIS ADVENTURES ON THE NIGHT OF 10 MAY 1775

As published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (London), July 1776

mentation. Nevertheless, Cooper was warned in time to escape, and while the Sons of Liberty were searching the college he was wandering north along the river bank with his "heaven-directed youth," Ogden. By morning he found refuge in the house of a friend where he was concealed through the day. The following night he was taken aboard H.M.S. *Kingfisher* again, and when this ship sailed for England on the 25th, Cooper saw America for the last time. The Reverend Benjamin Moore (B.A. 1768), assistant minister of Trinity Church, was made president *pro tempore*.

At the meeting of the Committee of Safety on 4 April 1776, Colonel Thomas Mifflin, quartermaster general of the army, informed the members that in the course of eight or ten days the number of troops in the city would reach 12,000, and requested proper housing for them. He requested further that "houses in an airy part of the city may be immediately prepared for a general hospital, capable of containing 800 sick, and within a mile of the city." The suitability of the college for the purpose must have been suggested at once, for at the same meeting it was ordered

> That the governors of the college in this city be requested to remove the college library, and every other matter in that building which might receive injury, and secure the same in such manner as they may think proper, and to have the edifice left only in a proper state for the reception of troops, within six days from this day, or as much sooner as will be convenient for the governors of the said college.[15]

The order was received by the treasurer of the college on April 6. Bitter resentment was added to the consternation it caused, since it was felt that this thing had been done to the college as a penalty for its loyalty. "In Consequence of this Demand," the *Matricula* states, "the Students were dispersed, the Library, Apparatus, &c were deposited in the City-Hall, & the College was turned into an Hospital." Several of the students had left by this time to take up arms on one side or the other: Hamilton, for example, had been a captain in command of a company of New

[15] *Journals of the Provincial Congress, Provincial Convention, Committee of Safety and Council of Safety of the State of New York 1775–1776–1777* (Albany: 1842), I, 400.

York artillery since March. We know that Mr. Moore did carry on instruction for a time in the town house of Leonard Lispenard at 13 (now 60) Wall Street, since Lispenard billed the college for rent after the war. Six B.A. degrees were conferred without a commencement in 1776, but the date that instruction ceased was never set down. The memoirs of Reverend Charles Inglis, a governor, reveal that

> The Governors met, and decided to send the Library, &c. to the City Hall; tho several were for sending them to Kingston, and one of the Governors offered the use of a house belonging to him at Kingston, for the purpose– this was overruled.[16]

Had the governors shipped the library out of the city, it might be intact today. As it was, during the occupation of New York, soldiers broke into the room where the books were stored, along with those of the New York Society Library, in the old City Hall on Wall Street, and helped themselves. John Pintard, the founder of The New-York Historical Society, stated that they carried the books off in their knapsacks and bartered them for grog, and Judge Thomas Jones, the loyalist historian, said that he saw in a public house on Long Island "nearly 40 books bound and lettered, in which were affixed the arms of Joseph Murray, Esq., under pawn from one dram to three drams each."[17] Two British generals, James Robertson and Robert Pigot, published proclamations in the New York newspapers in English and German ordering the return of the books and threatening the possessors with punishment as receivers of stolen goods. A portion of the library was recovered in 1802 when a large number of books belonging to pre-Revolutionary New York institutions were found in a disused room in St. Paul's Chapel.[18]

[16] Inglis Memoirs, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax (typewritten copy), under date of 4 April 1776.

[17] Thomas Jones, *History of New York during the Revolutionary War* (New-York Historical Society, 1879), I, 136. The story is told in detail in Austin Baxter Keep, *The Library in Colonial New York* (1909). Joseph Murray's fine law library had been bequeathed to King's in 1757; sixty-four volumes are now in the Columbia Law Library.

[18] The report that a librarian was discovered locked up with the books, "who, on coming out into the city, was quite surprised with the changes that had taken place" was declared in the *Morning Chronicle* of 13 December 1802 to be a hoax.

Another casualty was the first public art collection in America. Dr. Cooper had been in Boston in 1768 and had sat for a portrait by John Singleton Copley; upon his return he sent Copley his "Gown, Hood, and Band, by which to finish the Drapery." Cooper added: "if a Couple of Guineas will purchase the little Piece which I so much admired, the Nun with the Candle before her, You may send that also, which I will deposit in our College Library, as a Beginning to a public Collection." Copley replied: "As to the Candle light In consideration of the use You propose to make of it I will part with it for two Guineas, as it is my desire to see some publick collection begun in America. I shall therefore send it with Your por[trait]."[19]

A single glimpse of the King's College building as an American army hospital is available in a letter from Dr. Solomon Drowne (Brown 1773) to his father, dated New York, 4 June 1776:

> We waited on Doct[r] Morgan to Day, and were kindly received. He marked out a Course of Duty for us at the Hospital which will keep us very busy. The College is occupied for the General Hospital. It is a very elegant Building, and its Situation pleasant, and salubrious. We were shown the Apartment allotted us in it to Day, which we like very well; and expect to move from the place we put up at, tomorrow.[20]

On 15 September 1776, following the American defeat at the Battle of Long Island, and on the heels of Washington's retreat to Harlem, the British captured New York City, which they occupied until 25 November 1783. "Never in modern times," says Professor Oscar T. Barck, "has an enemy held one of the

[19] Cooper to Copley, 5 Aug. 1768, and the latter's undated reply in *Letters & Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham 1739–1776* (Massachusetts Historical Society, 1914), 71–72. There is no present trace of Copley's "Candle light" or other works of art Cooper may have assembled. The portrait of Cooper was presented to The New-York Historical Society by Nicholas William Stuyvesant in 1817 (NYHS Minutes, 14 Jan. 1817). Three years later a request for the portrait was transmitted to the Society by [Anthony] Bleecker in behalf of the faculty of Columbia, the donor cheerfully agreeing, and the Society authorized the gift (Minutes, 11 April 1820). Columbia then employed Stephen B. Hutchings to make a copy of the portrait, for which they paid him $20, together with $8.75 for the frame; the copy is now owned by the Society and the original Copley hangs in the Trustees Room at Columbia.

[20] Mercantile Library Association, *New York City during the American Revolution* ([New York:] 1861), 94–95. Dr. John Morgan of Philadelphia (Edinburgh 1763) was director general and physician in chief to the general hospital of the American army.

important cities of its opponent for so long a period."[21] During the occupation His Majesty's forces used the college building as a hospital, and Benjamin Moore served as deputy chaplain.

Washington had wished to destroy the city, but Congress felt that it could be recovered, and said no. There is evidence that the American soldiers were eager to set fire to the town in defiance of orders before they retreated, but they did nothing. However, on the evening of 20 September, fire did break out on a wharf near Whitehall Slip, swept westward between Whitehall and Broad Streets, crossed Broadway as the wind changed, burned Trinity Church and the schoolhouse where King's College had been started, destroyed everything between Lumber (now Church) Street and the river as it roared northward, and finally stopped at the open land in front of the college. Reverend Charles Inglis, reporting on the State of the Anglo-American Church, in 1776, claimed that "St. Paul's Church and King's College had shared the same fate [*i.e.*, burning], being directly on the line of fire, had I not been providentially on the spot, and sent a number of people with water on the roof of each."[22]

Of the nine colonial colleges, King's suffered most severely from the American Revolution. The others were all disrupted, and some were temporarily dispossessed, but King's lost practically everything. The president, the faculty, the governors, the library and philosophical apparatus, the alumni were scattered; the crown officials, the Anglican clergy, the wealthy merchants and lawyers from whom support had come, were beyond the seas; the college funds were greatly depleted, and when the building was repossessed it was in a painful state of disrepair.

The governors of the college had continued to meet from time to time during the occupation, and a treasurer had attended to the financial affairs of the corporation. On 24 March 1784 thirteen surviving governors, including two from the original board of 1754 and several serving under the *ex officio* designations of

[21] O. T. Barck, Jr., *New York City during the War for Independence* (New York: 1931), 48.

[22] *Documentary History of the State of New York* (8vo. ed., Albany: 1849–1851), III, 1061.

the charter, petitioned the State Legislature, "praying a revision of their Charter, & that the said College may be erected into an University." The wording of the petition shows that the 1784 board had before it the draft charter for an American University in the Province of New York which had been drawn up by Myles Cooper and submitted to the Earl of Dartmouth, colonial secretary, in 1774.

The Legislature on 1 May 1784 created the University of the State of New York and vested in its corporation, called the Regents of the University (Cooper's terminology), the rights and privileges previously vested in the corporation of King's College, the name of which was changed to Columbia College. The Regents were empowered to establish such additional schools and colleges in the State as seemed expedient, all to be embraced in the university system. The board included the governor of New York and other State and city officials and the professors of the college *ex officio*, and two members from each county and from the City of New York; by an amendment passed 26 November 1784 a dozen clergymen were added to the board, together with Hamilton, John Jay, and other prominent citizens. For many reasons the university scheme of 1784 proved unworkable and on 13 April 1787 the Legislature passed a new act permitting the university and the college to go their separate ways; the charter of King's College was revived and confirmed as the governing instrument of Columbia College, but *ex officio* membership in the corporation was abolished, as well as the requirement that the president be an Anglican communicant and that the Anglican prayerbook be used at the college chapel services. All the property of King's College was vested in Columbia, and a board of trustees was named with the power of filling vacancies in its membership; the successors of that board govern Columbia University today.

The immediate reason for the resumption of academic activity at the college was to keep DeWitt Clinton from going to Princeton, and this turned out to be as good a reason as any. The Regents had met in early May 1784, elected officers, and taken

certain preliminary steps, such as appointing a committee to supervise the repairs to the college building. Later in the month it was found that the nephew of Governor George Clinton had

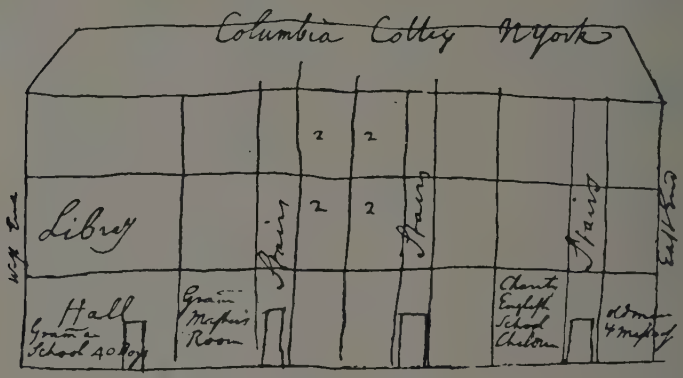


DIAGRAM OF THE COLLEGE IN 1784

The Rev. Dr. Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College, visited Columbia 21 September 1784 and drew this scheme of the building in his Itinerary (*Extracts from the Itineraries*, ed. by Franklin Bowditch Dexter, New Haven, 1916, p. 390). He also wrote in his Diary: "Visited the College—which has only a Junior Class consisting of nine Undergraduates." (*Literary Diary*, ed. by F. B. Dexter, New York, 1901, III, 138). This diagram shows only three stairways; probably there never was a fourth one at the west end, access to the library and other upstairs rooms being by way of the west middle stairway. At this time the Grammar School (forty boys) occupied the Hall, entered directly from the Green. Cochran, the headmaster, had the adjoining rooms. The Trinity school ("Charity English School Children"), taught by an "old man" and "4 mistresses," was occupying temporarily the first-floor rooms in the east entry. By 1800 the students' living quarters had been taken over by the faculty. In the reconstruction of 1817–20 the Hall was carried up another story, extended to the west middle entry, provided with a hanging gallery, and became the Chapel. The library and its "anti-room" were thereafter located on the third story.

come to town with his father who was intending to place the lad under Dr. Witherspoon's care at New Jersey College. This electrified Mayor Duane, one of the Regents, who felt that it would not do for the governor's nephew to go out of the State for his education. Duane applied to William Cochran, who was conducting a grammar school in the city, to ascertain whether

he "would undertake the care of him, and such others as might offer, until the appointments for the College could be made."[23] Cochran readily agreed. On 15 May the Regents established a grammar school, making Cochran headmaster, and giving him permission to remove his school to the college building; they also appointed Cochran temporary instructor, in the college, of Greek and Latin. On the same day the Regents appointed a committee to examine candidates for admission to the college. Two days later DeWitt Clinton was admitted as the first matriculated student of Columbia College; eight others were subsequently admitted with him to the junior class.

In November 1784 the Regents employed D. Nevin, a builder, to inspect the roof of the college and make an estimate of the cost "to repair the said Roof in such manner as to preserve the College from injury through the winter, and also an Estimate of the expence of a Thorough Repair of the Roof." Nevin made his report 2 December, and the board ordered him to make temporary repairs. The following April the financial situation was somewhat brighter: there was £952 in the hands of the treasurer, and some £1169 of King's College funds available in London. Thereafter repairs went forward, and by December of 1785 there are records of over a thousand pounds being spent on the renovation of the college; a vote in the summer of 1785 included "the making of the Porter's Lodge comfortable" as part of these repairs.

In April 1787 Columbia resumed its separate corporate existence, and on 21 May the trustees unanimously elected William Samuel Johnson, LL.D., son of the first president, to the presidency of the college. At the meeting of 12 November Dr. Johnson appeared and signified his acceptance of the office; a committee, consisting of Dr. Samuel Bard, Dr. Nicholas Romayne, and the Rev. James Wilson, was appointed to report on "the State of the College."

[23] Statement of Cochran in David Hosack, *Memoir of DeWitt Clinton* (New York: 1829), 29–30; see also Cochran's "Memoirs" in this *Quarterly*, XXXVIII, January 1954, 64–65.

The committee, "after several meetings and diligent Enquiries," made a detailed report on the 26th of November. Five students slept and boarded in the college; thirty-four slept and boarded in the city, but five of them occupied rooms and studied in college. The whole eastern staircase of the building was in the possession of the president, and under repair. Room 1[24] was in the possession of Mr. Cochran, together with a cellar kitchen beneath, and the cellar adjoining, and also Room 2 "for which he is liable to pay such rent as this Board shall appoint, and to resign them at the requisition of the Board"; Cochran still had private pupils at this time. Room 5 was in possession of John Kemp, professor of mathematics, and Room 7 was in possession of John Daniel Gros, professor of geography. Jonathan Baldwin (Princeton 1755), the steward, had Room 14 and the kitchen below the Hall. Room 13 was the natural philosophy classroom and the library. Rooms 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 were for the accommodation of students. Altogether there were fourteen rooms, with their studies, exclusive of the apartments of the president, of the Hall, and of kitchens and cellars. The committee added that the professors have no apartments properly fitted up for the use of their classes, and that "most of the apartments in College are in want of Repairs." The outside of the building, they reported, had been lately pointed and painted, but the spouts did not properly convey the water from the roof; the lead, which formed the troughs in the roof had in many places been cut away. There was a bell in the cupola, but it was "not sufficiently large to be heard by the Students who live in the City." There was a convenient coach house and stable built for the use of the president, and a new necessary for the use of the professors and students. The eastern side of the college lot was under a good fence, nearly finished, but the south, west, and north sides were in want of a new fence; the gardens had no partition fences; the porter was in need of a lodge; the trees wanted dressing; and the pavement was broken in several places. It was reported that there was a pump in the lot, in good repair, and that "the neighbors

[24] No plans of the college showing the location of the rooms now survive.

VIEW OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Drawn by Alexander Anderson (afterward M.D. Columbia 1796), "the father of wood-engraving in America," when he was fifteen, and engraved on copper by Cornelius Tiebout. Published in *The New-York Magazine; or Literary Repository*, May 1790.

are in the habit of entering at all times, the College Yard, under pretence of fetching water from the pump."

In July 1787 the Rev. Manasseh Cutler (Yale 1765) was in New York on business of the Ohio Company, and visited Columbia; his impression was a favorable one, and somewhat counteracts the lugubrious tone of the report just quoted:

The College is built of stone, in an elegant style, three stories high, with three cross entries. In front is a square and spacious yard, with a very high fence. There is a flight of steps up to each entry. The building is very long and wide. At the west end is the hall in front and dining-room in the rear, with only a partition between them. In the second story over the hall is the library. It was once large, but most of the books were pillaged by the British soldiery, and the greater part of the shelves are now empty . . . . On the opposite side is the apparatus chamber, but this suffered the same fate with the library, and few articles, and those of little consideration, remain. In the third story, over the library, is the chamber where the Professor of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy [Kemp] delivers his lectures and instructs the class in mathematics. It is very prettily prepared for the purpose . . . . Adjoining this chamber is the apparatus which he uses in the course of his instruction . . . . The presiding Professor [Gros] is a Dutchman, but very polite, and invited us to his chamber at the opposite end of the college, where he resides with his wife and family in a very pretty style. I was pleased with the college, and the

civilities and attention of the Governors. It stands in a fine, airy situation, towards North River, just in the edge of the city.[25]

Although Columbia had appointed a medical faculty in 1785, little seems to have been done until 1792, when the faculty was reorganized and Dr. Samuel Bard was made dean. In March 1792 a committee of trustees reported on certain changes in the building necessary "for the accommodation of the Medical Profession" and was authorized to build a small staircase in the northwest corner of the college to the third story and make alterations in the partitions of the rooms over the library.

Earlier in 1792 the trustees had made a "Representation" to the Regents for financial relief from the legislature, mentioning two pressing needs: "a hall for visitations, examinations, commencements and other public exercises, designed to be placed in the front of a square of which the present building forms only a side or wing" and the construction of stone walls at the sides of the college property, necessitated by the digging down and levelling of the streets. In April the legislature voted to grant the college £1500 "for the purpose of enlarging its library," £200 "for a chemical apparatus," £1200 for "building a wall necessary to support the grounds of the College," £5000 for erecting a hall and an additional wing," and £750 annually for five years for salaries of additional professors. Nearly three years later, in January 1795, the trustees reported to the Regents that the price of labor and building material were so high that the construction funds were not immediately applied to their respective objects but that they had "vested them in the funded debt [of the United States] and waited a more favourable opportunity." Nevertheless:

> Though the expence of building continued to increase, yet there was a necessity for undertaking the wall last summer, on which £655:11 have been expended, and it is not near half finished. So great is become the want of lecture rooms for the professors, and a hall for public exhibitions and commencements, that the trustees intend, without delay, to convert their stock into cash and undertake the hall and wings; relying on the

[25] Journal entry of 10 July 1787 in W. P. and J. P. Cutler, eds., *Life, Journals, and Correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler* (Cincinnati: 1888), II, 239–240.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS ENVIRONS 1797

Section of "A New & Accurate Plan of the City of New York . . ." drawn by B. Taylor and engraved by J. Roberts. By this time the built-up area of the city had surrounded the college and pushed way uptown on the west side to the New York Hospital on Barley (now Duane) Street. The riverfront of the Columbia property was occupied by Rhinelander's wharf and basin. The college property along Barclay Street and between Chapel Street and the river had been laid out in lots and was being leased for residential and business use.

The New-York Historical Society

known generosity of the legislature to afford farther aid if circumstances require it.[26]

A foundation was constructed at the west of the college property at right angles to the existing building, which would carry out a second side of the originally-planned quadrangle, and incidentally block off the view of the river. A resolution was adopted 7 December 1795 providing that the wing should be two stories in height. At the northern end of the foundation a superstructure to contain a hall and several recitation rooms was begun "in order to supply the more immediate wants of the institution."

In March 1796 the trustees made application to the legislature for additional funds to complete the new wing, without success. The committee supervising the building of the wing was authorized in April to continue the work until the State funds were exhausted. A further effort to obtain legislative aid was made early in 1797, but this was also turned down, and in June the trustees authorized the building committee "to dispose of the Boards & Planks, & other perishable Materials that are on hand."

This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued for some time. In this writer's opinion the lowest and most discouraging point in the history of Columbia was reached about the turn of the nineteenth century. Constant appeals for pecuniary aid had been made to the legislature without success. Such was the indifference of the trustees that on nine occasions in 1801 it was impossible to assemble a quorum; that year the rector of a church in Burlington, New Jersey, was elected president, but aside from attending commencement he did nothing, and resigned before the year's end. Repairs to the college were made at various times, and in December 1801 the treasurer was "requested to procure the Manhattan Water to be introduced into the College Building." A petition was sent to the legislature of 1802 requesting £2000 to enable the trustees to complete "Part of the Additional Building to the College." Instead, a State grant was made jointly to the two existing New York colleges, Columbia and Union, of lands

[26] *Journal of the Senate of the State of New-York . . . 1795* (New-York, 1795), 42.

at Lake George, Ticonderoga, and Crown Point. Several years were to elapse before the colleges were able to sell these tracts and convert the gift into cash, but Columbia went ahead with the building of a "Hall & Lecture Rooms" on the northern third of the foundation already erected. A committee had been appointed 11 November 1802 "to enquire & to report on the Subject of finishing the Wing to the College Building; taking into consideration the Propriety of Removing the College to some more convenient Situation." The following month the committee reported and was discharged and another committee was appointed to make a loan of $5000 for the addition; the funds were obtained from the Manhattan Company. By 1804 the trustees were able to report to the Regents that the building was nearly completed.

Only eight years later, in an appeal to the legislature for funds, dated 15 January 1812, the trustees gave a humiliating report on the structure:

> The New Building has been most unfaithfully put up. The work is badly done: the Hall cannot be used with safety for such a number as would fill it. Part of the roof which formerly came off has been repaired: but a recent storm has blown off another part to which nothing is done. The outside stairs is weak & crazy: it is under-propped; but it is so infirm as to totter when several persons attempt to ascend or descend & even put in jeopardy the lives of the Students. There is reason to fear that it may suddenly fall when forty or fifty of them are on it . . . . [*The trustees added that:*] The roof of the old wing [*i.e.*, the original building] where the professors reside is so decayed and insufficient that the apartments are deluged by every rain.

Things had not improved two years later when the trustees made an urgent and pathetic appeal to the legislature of 1814:

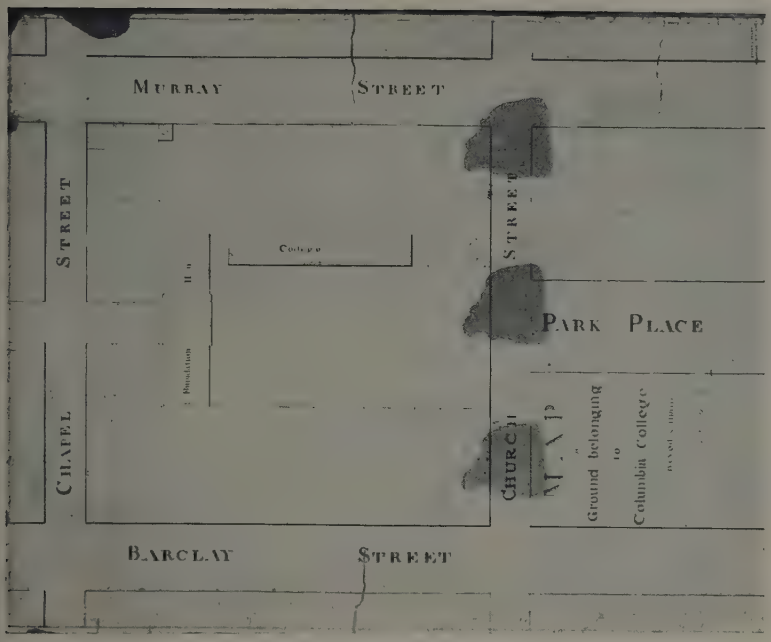
> Situated in the most important City of the State, [*they said,*] an Object of Curiosity and Remark to Strangers; & indispensable in its position to a large Portion of the Students who must obtain a liberal Education on the spot, or be deprived of it altogether, Columbia College presents a Spectacle mortifying to its friends, humiliating to the City, and calculated to inspire opinions which it is impossible your enlightened body would wish to countenance. The foundation of a new wing to the Edifice laid by the order & under an Appropriation of your honorable body, has been for Years a heap of ruins solely for want of further public assistance.

The memorial, which is extensive and full of woe, closed by reminding the legislature of the "landed property, which if she still retained it, would be amply sufficient for her wants."[27]

Chapter CXX of the Laws of 1814, passed 13 April, and entitled "An Act instituting a Lottery for the promotion of Literature and for other purposes," deserves commemoration as one of the most notable examples of legislative largess in history, though no one suspected it at the time, least of all the officials of Columbia. Funds to be raised by lottery under this act were to be distributed to Union College ($200,000), to Hamilton College ($40,000), to the Asbury African Church in New York City ($4000 for a school and to pay off a debt), to the College of Physicians and Surgeons ($30,000), etc. To The New-York Historical Society the legislators gave a set of the Revised Laws of the State, "the journals of the present and future sessions of the legislature," and the privilege of having its agents copy, without paying office fees, such documents or records in the public offices of the State "as they may judge proper to promote the objects of the said institution." The editor of the 1814 laws added a note stating that "No bill before the legislature excited greater interest and attention than this act. Much credit is due to the unwearied exertions of the able and eloquent president of Union College, in procuring its passage." The Reverend Dr. Eliphalet Nott returned to Schenectady triumphant from his lobbying expeditions. Columbia's share was a white elephant indeed: no funds, but a parcel of some twenty acres of land "situate in the ninth ward of the city of New-York, known by the name of the Botanic Garden, and lately conveyed to the people of this state by David Hosack," to which was added the requirement that the college should remove there within twelve years or forfeit the grant.[28] The disappointment of the trustees was so great and the

[27] The reference was to the Crown grants of some 54,000 acres in the territory west of the Connecticut River called the New Hampshire Grants, claimed by the Province of New York, but yielded by the State in 1790 to Vermont in a treaty which extinguished all New York claims of title. Most of the land was then wilderness and remains so today; it is difficult to see how it could have taken care of Columbia's financial problem in 1814.

[28] This condition was repealed by Chapter XIX of the Laws of 1819, which also included a grant of $10,000 to Columbia, the legislature admitting that the grant of 1814 "has not been productive of the benefits intended by the said act."



"MAP OF THE GROUND BELONGING TO COLUMBIA COLLEGE," 1815

"Surveyed & made by Amos Corning, Sity Surveyor, New York July 21st 1815" This map shows the area of the college grounds as 379′ 3″ x 401′ 1″, twenty-five feet having been taken off at the north for the widening of Murray Street and a similar area at the south for Barclay Street. The college building is given as 181′ 3″ x 31. The "Foundation," laid 1794–96, measures 168 x 46 and the "House" (*i.e.*, the badly built wing erected 1804–06) is 60 x 46, with its rickety outside staircase measuring 20 x 10′ 6″. The fire-engine house, shown on Murray Street, was a shed occupied by Neptune Engine Company No. 6 by permission of the college from 1785 to 1832. The lots along Chapel and Barclay Streets were leased for private residences, as was the property between Chapel and Greenwich Streets (not shown). All the Columbia land between Greenwich Street and the river was leased to Frederick Rhinelander for his wharf and basin.

Columbiana, Columbia University

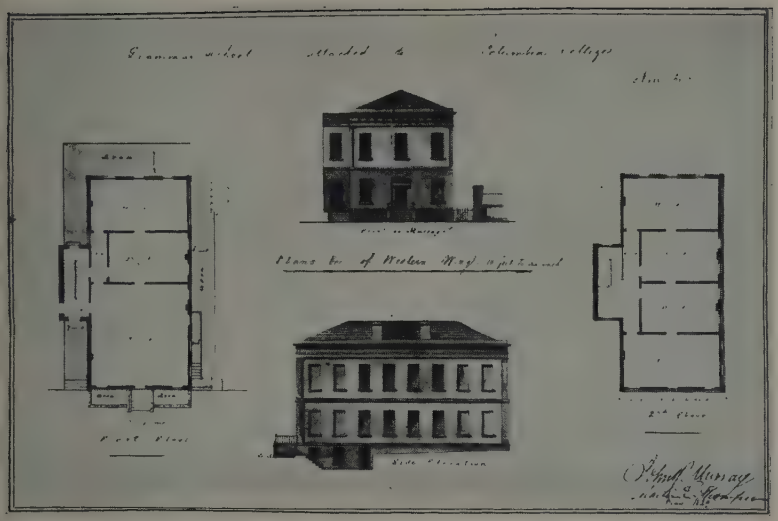
property itself was so ill-regarded that the college did not take possession of it until late in 1816. No one envisioned the time when this tract would be extremely valuable land in the center of a great metropolis and an important means of getting Columbia out of the doldrums in which three-quarters of the nineteenth century were spent.[29]

[29] The Botanic Garden property originally included all the land between 47th and 51st Streets, from Fifth Avenue to within about a hundred feet of Sixth Avenue.

In March 1815 it was recorded that "The buildings of the College are in great need of repairs: especially of a New Roof for the old wing, which is so decayed and leaky as to endanger all the stories beneath," and the following August a resolution was passed providing for a new roof, or the repair of the old one. At this time, however, the idea of moving the college was seriously entertained. The trustees heard in May 1816 the report of a committee which had been "requested to enquire whether an eligible site for a college could be found at a distance from the city not greater than Art Street [now Astor Place]" and members of the board were authorized "to negotiate for the purchase, of the representatives of Anthony L. Bleecker deceased, of a piece of ground near Col. [Richard] Varick's place, containing 32 lots." Two weeks later when it was reported that the ground might be purchased for $700 a lot the board quickly decided that the price was greater than it was expedient for them to give.

Following many years of conservatism and uncertainty, the trustees abruptly embarked on a bold and successful construction program in 1817. A report on the state of the college made in May by Bishop Hobart and other board members asserted that the reputation of the institution suffered in the public view from the "apparent neglect and decay of its edifaces," from the want of classrooms, a more extensive library and apparatus, etc., and that while these defects existed, "the character of the institution will not be elevated to that rank in public estimation, which it ought & deserves to maintain among the other seminaries of learning in this country." Plans for the remodeling and new construction were ready in September: at each extremity of the old building a wing about fifty feet square was proposed, to contain two houses for professors, and the original structure was to be altered to provide an adequate chapel and library, together with additional classrooms. One plan contemplated a monumental entrance portico in the center leading to a large chapel, but a simpler scheme was adopted. The gables and cupola of the King's

In 1823 this tract was rented for $125 a year and taxes; leased since 1929 as Rockefeller Center, the property (minus the 47th Street block and some Fifth Avenue frontage which had been sold) now brings $3,600,000 a year and taxes.



COLUMBIA GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Plans of Martin E. Thompson, architect, May 1829

Wash drawing at Avery Library, Columbia University

College building disappeared, and a handsome and simple Greek Revival building faced with stucco was created. The architect was James O'Donnell, who received $126 for his work. The estimated cost was $40,000, but when the building committee made its final report, 2 October 1820, the sum of $80,741.47 had been spent.[30] Nevertheless, the college had every reason for satisfaction in the step it had taken: it was no longer necessary to apologize for the appearance of the campus, and the work of construction and reconstruction was so faithfully done that complaints regarding the college edifice do not appear in the records for decades.

A grammar school had been established at the college in 1763 and again in 1784, but neither had continued in operation long. In 1827 the need for a preparatory department was brought be-

[30] The committee added that all the bills were paid and a small balance remained in the bank. Exact vouchers for all disbursements and even lists of the workmen and days worked were turned over to the trustees; these have survived to the present time.

It can be assumed that the rickety "wing" of 1802–1804 was quietly removed from the scene during the building operations.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE LOOKING EAST TO CITY HALL PARK, 1831

Beyond the college fence and gate at Church Street is a row of private houses on the north side of Park Place, with Broadway in the distance, which are shown in the reverse view (reproduced on the page opposite) as seen looking west from within the City Hall Park fence past the Park Place Hotel (1828) at the corner of Broadway, where W.A. Colman's Literary Rooms were housed, with the college farther west down Park Place. Both views were drawn by Alexander Jackson Davis, engraved by Fenner Sears & Co., and published by Isaac Taylor Hinton and Simpkin & Marshall, London, in May and August respectively, 1831, to illustrate John Howard Hinton's *History and Topography of the United States* (2 vols., 1830–32).

fore the trustees, and the following year they established the Grammar School of Columbia College. By the end of 1828 the growth and promise of the school had been such that the trustees decided to erect a separate building to house it. The architect Martin E. Thompson drew plans for a fine Greek Revival structure with a central auditorium and wings to be erected on Murray Street north of the college and on the same axis. The New York Society Library and the Athenaeum were offered leases in the eastern wing, but they declined, so Columbia decided to erect only the western wing for the time being. A contract was signed with Thompson in May 1829, and the 30- by 60-foot building was put up in record time, the committee reporting the 18th of September that the structure could be occupied the following week. The cost was $8,788.72. Although the need for a large

PARK PLACE FROM BROADWAY LOOKING WEST TO THE HUDSON, 1831

Alexander Jackson Davis, who drew this view (see caption opposite), also drew the well-known view of Columbia College and College Green which V. Balch engraved to illustrate an unsigned article on the college in the *New-York Mirror, and Ladies' Literary Gazette,* 6 December 1828, which reported: "The public rooms consist of a chapel, fifty-six feet by twenty-eight; a library, forty-five by twenty-eight, with an anti-room for the accommodation of persons consulting the library; a philosophical and chemical lecture-room, containing also the laboratory; two rooms for the accommodation of the philosophical apparatus; the president's chamber, and four convenient lecture rooms."

auditorium was discussed in later years, Columbia never completed the Grammar School building.

No college or university is ever contented with its quarters very long, and by the '40s Columbia was suffering from lack of space for scientific collections and apparatus, and for classrooms; there was no place on the college grounds where the janitor could reside. President Nathaniel Fish Moore recommended in 1844 the erection of a building on Murray Street to house the janitor, the philosophical apparatus, etc. The trustees laid aside the building proposal, but authorized the construction of a lodge for the janitor on the south side of College Green opposite the east wing of the college, which was finished by the end of the year at a cost of $1,440.[31]

[31] President Moore was pleased with the new lodge, and reported that by some

Meanwhile, as the years passed, the character of the Columbia neighborhood changed from a residential to a completely commercial area: on all sides the college was hemmed in by factories, offices, and warehouses; by 1850 more and more was heard about the removal of the college. The committee on the collegiate course stated in a report made 7 November 1853 that:

> the present Academic course . . . should be essentially modified, and that no efficient change can be made while the College remains in its present situation and position . . . . a change in the locality would arouse its slumbering energies, infuse life and vigour into it, and thus promote the object now sought of eventual improvement.

Exactly a week later a resolution was passed by the trustees "that it is expedient that the College shall be removed from its present locality, with all reasonable diligence."

The Botanic Garden property, which had been reached by the expanding city, was an obvious choice for a new college site; the streets were already being laid out and graded. In July 1855 Columbia designated Richard Upjohn as architect and he went to work on plans for a long Gothic structure to be erected between 49th and 50th Streets west of the Fifth Avenue. Before ground had been broken, however, the trustees received a communication (in June 1856) from Benjamin R. Winthrop offering for sale the property of the Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, also between 49th and 50th Streets and near the street which was opened up in 1860 as Madison Avenue, including buildings "peculiarly well adapted to the uses of the College." The opportunity of securing quarters practically ready for occupancy appealed to the trustees, and they purchased the property in October for $63,000. It was a temporary measure, and the Upjohn project was merely postponed; subsequent events, however, kept Columbia at the Madison Avenue site until 1897.[32]

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minor alterations and movings in the college building he had gained considerable space: mineral collections were placed in the gallery of the chapel; the anteroom of the library, now divided by partitions, gave room for the philosophical apparatus and all the astronomical instruments; shelves with glazed doors placed in the window recesses of the north library gallery and in the chapel provided space for geological specimens.

[32] It should be added that in April 1856 Gouverneur Morris Wilkins (Yale 1818)

COLUMBIA COLLEGE AND COLLEGE GREEN

Taken by Victor Prévost, a French artist, in 1855; probably the "photographic view" for which the Columbia trustees appropriated $35 on 2 April 1855. Prévost's negatives, made on oiled or wax paper, are among the very first produced in this country; a collection of forty-two New York City scenes by him was given by Samuel Verplanck Hoffman to The New-York Historical Society in 1909.

As soon as the decision to move had been definitely made the trustees gave their attention to the sale or leasing of the downtown property. Therefore, when the city announced its intention in January 1855 of extending Park Place through the college grounds, no objection was made; the college was assessed $170,000 for opening the street, but the city immediately paid $200,000 for the damage Columbia had sustained. The College Green was destroyed during the spring of 1855, and for two years the building stood stark, unshaded, and unadorned at the top of a rough embankment. In March 1855 the porter's lodge gave way to a warehouse erected by Wilson G. Hunt & Co. But sentiment was not entirely lacking on the part of the corporation: on April 2d they paid an unnamed "artist" $35 for a "Photographic view of the College," and on June 4th the treasurer was authorized to pay a sum not exceeding $95 "for the

offered Columbia a ten-acre site for a college in Westchester County together with an endowment of $20,000 for a professorship in constitutional law if the college should move there, but the trustees declined the offer.

expense of cutting and preserving the great Sycamore Tree." At an auction sale conducted by Adrian H. Müller (A.B. 1822) at the Merchants Exchange, 29 January 1857, the actual site of the college building along the north side of Park Place, divided into thirteen parcels, fetched $596,350.

The new owners of the property were allowed to take possession 10 May 1857, the eighty-second anniversary of Myles Cooper's escape from the mob. On the 26th of April Dr. Morgan Dix, rector of Trinity, wrote in his diary: "Dined at the College. The place in great confusion as they are preparing to move." On May 3d he "Took tea at Prof. McVickar's. . . . This was the last evening in which we assembled within the old walls; as the work of demolition has already commenced and the few remaining occupants move out during this week." George Templeton Strong took a last look on May 9th and recorded the next day in his diary: "The demolition of Col: Coll: has begun; inspected yesterday afternoon the progress already made by the invading forces. Hibernia rampant and destructive in its very penetralia. *Sic transit; Eheu fugaces*, as McVickar used to observe. . . ."

The *New York Evening Post* reported May 9th:

> The exercises in Columbia College were concluded in the old building, to be resumed next at the buildings in Forty-ninth street, near the Fourth avenue, until permanently located in the new edifice, proposed to be erected in the Fifth avenue, near Fiftieth street. At the close of the chapel exercises on Tuesday [May 5] President King briefly addressed the students, exhorting them, wherever they went, to carry the good and leave the bad behind—to go to the new locality with a clean record, and preserve it clean. At the close of the President's remarks, a farewell song, written for the occasion by John Ward, a member of the Junior Class, was sung in the tune of Auld Lang Syne.
>
> In the course of the day the cornerstone of the College building was disinterred. It is a solid block of red sand stone, measuring three feet in length, one foot in depth and one foot in thickness. The letters of the inscription are as fresh and sharp as the day they were cut. . . .

On the 17th the same journal carried a notice that "The old college building in Park Place is now deserted and this morning a strong force of workmen were employed in tearing off the roofing and undermining the walls."

THE LAST DAYS OF THE OLD COLLEGE

Photographed about mid-May 1857 after demolition had commenced

Columbiana Collection, Columbia University

MRS. NATHANIEL (LUCRETIA) SHAW, JR. (1737–1781)

MARY SHAW (1751–1775)

By William Johnston (1732–1772), New London, Conn., 1763

WILLIAM JOHNSTON (1732–1772)

A FORGOTTEN PORTRAIT PAINTER OF NEW ENGLAND

by LILA PARRISH LYMAN*

ALTHOUGH William Johnston's identity as a man and artist was long obscure, the orphaned progeny of his brush have recently enjoyed considerable attention from exhibitors, critics and connoisseurs. The present article, with Susan Sawitzky's accompanying checklist of Johnston's known portraits, is the first attempt in print to revive him as a man and reunite the artist with his work.[1]

In life, Johnston was widely known and respected by his contemporaries. His intimates included John Singleton Copley (five years his junior), Copley's half brother Henry Pelham (who learned engraving from his more famous father, Peter), and the portraitist John Greenwood who, at fifteen years of age (William then being but ten), was apprenticed to William's still well-remembered father, Thomas Johnston (born in Boston, 1708; died there, 1767), a portrait and heraldic painter, japanner and engraver.[2] During William's formative years just preceding his coming of age, he must surely have frequented to good advantage the studios of his father's Boston neighbors, the elder

* Wife of Mr. Dwight C. Lyman, president of the New London County [Conn.] Historical Society, the author discovered there the document which established the key picture by which a whole group of related portraits may now be attributed to William Johnston. As a result, Mrs. William (Susan Clay) Sawitzky suggested that Mrs. Lyman write this first biography for use in a book on that artist which Mrs. Sawitzky had in preparation from her late husband's notes. The increasing interest in Johnston's work during the two years since the article was written makes it advisable to publish it independently.

[1] Since this article was written, the Connecticut Historical Society has presented an exhibition of thirteen paintings attributed to William Johnston and published an article about him in its October 1954 *Bulletin*. Unfortunately none of the existing documentation could be tied to any one of the paintings shown. It is a pleasure for the New London County Historical Society to authenticate its portrait of Lucretia Shaw by Willam Johnston's receipt to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., and so to corroborate the other Johnston attributions.

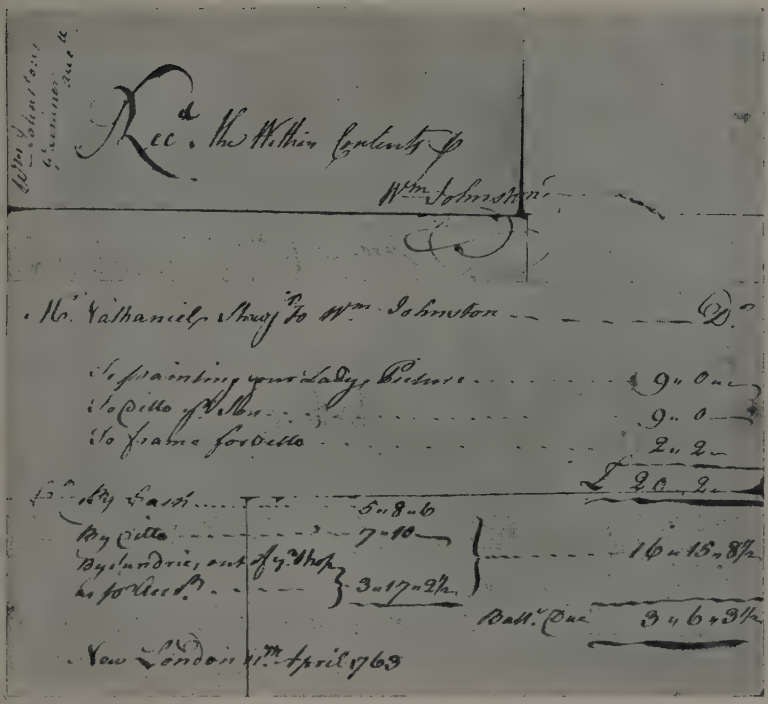
[2] Sidney Gunn in *Dictionary of American Biography;* F. W. Coburn, "The Johnstons of Boston" in *Art in America*, XXI (Dec. 1932), 29–36, (Oct. 1933), 132–138; Ms. Dictionary of Artists in America 1564–1860 (NYHS).

Pelham and the renowned John Smibert, both of whom died there in 1751. The well-known English-trained portrait painter, Joseph Blackburn, later criss-crossed Johnston's professional path, while Copley, whose success outstripped them all, was not above asking his friend William for technical advice. Johnston left a substantial body of meritorious work in a style (as Susan Sawitzky has pointed out) similar to that of the younger Copley and with unmistakable traces of the influence of Blackburn. Thus linking the English and late 18th-century American traditions in painting, Johnston takes on a significance which merits study.[3]

And yet, after his death and practically up to the present, William Johnston's identity as an artist and his connection with the portraits which the late William Sawitzky assigned to a single though anonymous hand, had been completely lost. Indeed, some of his portraits had been misattributed to other artists, including Copley, Blackburn, and even Ralph Earl, and Johnston himself was forgotten.

It was the present writer's good fortune to discover the documentary link between the man and his work. Among the portraits which William Sawitzky had shown to be by a single though unidentified artist were two which had hung in the old Shaw Mansion at New London, Connecticut, (now the home of the New London County Historical Society) ever since they were painted. They are delightful 18th-century portraits of Mrs. Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., and her young sister-in-law, Mary Shaw, both definitely identified as to subject but not until now as to artist. While cataloguing the library of the Society, the writer found in a box of papers from the estate of a Shaw descendant a receipted bill dated "New London 11th. April 1763," which showed that "Mr. Nathaniel Shaw Jr. [was indebted] to Wm. Johnston [Limner]" for "painting your Ladys Picture," for a portrait of "yr. Son," and for a frame. Here was proof positive that Shaw's lady, Lucretia Harris Rogers Shaw, was the

[3] See Mrs. Sawitzky's forthcoming critical study and catalogue raisonnée of the artist's work.



WILLIAM JOHNSTON'S RECEIPTED BILL TO NATHANIEL SHAW, JR.

For portraits of "your Lady" and "yr Son," New London, 11th April 1763

Collections of the New London County Historical Society

work of William Johnston and, since the portrait of Mary Shaw is indubitably by the same hand, that he painted her also.[4]

Mrs. William (Susan Clay) Sawitzky, who visited the Society only a week after this discovery in order to study the five Ralph Earls of members of the Shaw-Woodbridge-Perkins family which had owned the house from the time it was built in 1756

[4] In referring to a portrait of Nathaniel Shaw, Jr.'s "son," Johnston presumably meant his wife's son, Josiah Rogers (1756–1764) by her previous marriage. It has not been located. Mary Shaw, judging by her age as shown in picture, must have been painted at about the same time as her sister-in-law Lucretia, but presumably Mary's father (Nathaniel, Sr.) rather than her brother (Nathaniel, Jr.) would have paid for her portrait, so we can hardly suppose Johnston in his receipt to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., to have carelessly written "son" for "sister."

until the Society bought it in 1907, being informed of this discovery, examined Mrs. Shaw's portrait off the wall. To everyone's delight she discovered the initials "WJ" painted on the back across the joint of the inner and outer frames, thus clinching the portrait's connection with the receipt and proving this to be the original frame which the painter chose for it. The other portraits which had been attributed by William Sawitzky to the then-unknown painter of Mrs. Shaw or which were later judged to belong to the group he had established, and so can now be attributed to William Johnston, are listed by Mrs. Sawitzky in her checklist of the artist's work which follows. It is the purpose of the present article, not to discuss Johnston's paintings themselves (for that will be done in a critical essay and catalogue raisonnée by Mrs. Sawitzky), but to reconstruct as much of his life as the rather meager record will permit.

William Johnston is one of the lesser known of that extraordinary family of Johnstons who flourished in Boston in the 18th century. One of eleven children of Thomas Johnston, he followed his father's footsteps in a career in the art world, as did three of his brothers. None of the boys, however, displayed the amazing versatility of their father.

In 1732, when William was born, Thomas Johnston was living at the Golden Lion in Ann Street near the Town Dock in Boston, with his twenty-seven-year-old wife, Rachel Thwing, whom he had married in June 1730. Thomas, their eldest child, was a year old and William was born December 30, 1732, and baptised the following day. Both of the boys were christened in the Brattle Street Church, of which their father had been a member since 1726. Thomas, Sr., was busy with his work of japanning, at which he was a master craftsman, but not too engrossed to take an interest in town affairs. He was appointed one of the Clerks of the Market at the town meeting and became a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. Sarah, the first daughter,[5] had not arrived at the time of her father's first

[5] Sarah was married in June 1759 to Wensley Hobby, of Boston and Middletown, by whom she had five children. She died in 1784.

political appointment in 1736, but was expected momentarily, and Samuel, the third son, was two years old, or else dead.[6] A second Samuel was born in 1739 and young Benjamin (who was also destined to be a portrait painter[7]) arrived in 1740.[8]

With this steady increase of family one suspects that the Ann Street house was getting rather crowded, so it is no surprise to find that in 1743 they are all moved to a new home in Brattle Street with a shop in the rear. There business went on, as usual, in a number of different fields. Thomas painted portraits and coats of arms, he japanned and painted furniture, he engraved maps, music, bookplates, and clock faces, and he cut tombstones.[9] His wife, Rachel, after giving birth to two more girls, Martha in 1745 and Rachel[10] in 1746, presumably died, for on August 6, 1747, Thomas married Rachel's twenty-two-year-old cousin Bathsheba, the daughter of Benjamin Thwing. Bathsheba may have disliked a shop on the premises. At any rate Thomas petitioned the city in 1747 for liberty to build a shop on the north side of Fanueil Hall Market, but the request was denied and, so

[6] Death records for 18th-century Boston are lamentably weak, although this deficiency is in some measure supplied by Harriet M. Forbes, *Gravestones of Early New England* (Boston: 1928). There are almost no records of infant deaths. (Birth, baptism, and marriage records, customarily kept by the churches rather than the town, are fairly complete.) It has not been possible to find death dates for either of the infants Samuel, but it is safe to assume they died as children, as fifteen years later the name was again given to a baby.

[7] The proof of this is contained in the account books of the firm of Rea and Johnston (see note 23). See also Ms. Dictionary of Artists in America (NYHS). Benjamin chose for his wife Anne, daughter of John Stickney, a painter and japanner of Newbury. The couple settled there after their marriage in 1770 and had six children. Benjamin died in 1818.

[8] All birth, marriage, and death dates have been checked with three authorities: (1) Record Commissioners' Reports, City of Boston; (2) Records of the Brattle Street Church and the Second Church in Boston (copies in City Hall, Boston); and (3) Cornelia B. Williams, *Ancestry of Lawrence Williams* (Chicago: 1915).

[9] Or at least we assume he cut and did not merely design them. When William Clark died in 1743, the total cost of his stone was £94, and of this Thomas received £57. This 60–40 division seems a little out of balance unless he did most of the work.

[10] Rachel married in 1764 Daniel Rea II, for whose father Thomas Johnston, Sr., had done some painting. Her husband, having learned his trade under the elder Johnston, became his father-in-law's partner and upon his death bought out the business. The Rea and Johnston connections have been so well covered in Mabel M. Swan's article in *Antiques* for May 1943 that they need not be reviewed here. Suffice it to say that the account books of the firm expand out knowledge of the Johnston family considerably. (See note 23.)

far as the records show, the shop remained at his Brattle Street address.

No doubt by now the older boys were being pressed into service in the business and were laying the foundations for their life work. About 1742 John Greenwood was apprenticed to Johnston, and the young Johnstons probably sat in on the lessons as well. William was later to choose portrait painting as his field, but he and Thomas were both japanners like their father. Bathsheba bore three sons: James,[11] John[12] (1752), and Samuel[13] (1756), the third to bear that name. John and Samuel also turned out to be portrait painters and both became officers in the Revolution. The neighborhood in which the Johnston boys grew up was pleasant and the other residents were people of similar interest. The Pelhams, John Smibert, John Copley, and John Greenwood all lived near, so William and his brothers had a congenial group of young artists to encourage and stimulate them.

One further facet of Thomas, Sr.'s multifarious career exerted a shaping influence on that of his sons: church music and organ-building. He had served as a leader of the singing at the Brattle Street Church and as a member of its committee to revise the Psalms of David.[14] In 1752 he contracted to build an organ for

[11] We don't know when James was born—only that he was a mariner in 1772—but he is understood to be the eldest of Bathsheba's boys.

[12] John married Martha Spear in November 1773 and had four daughters (one of whom was alive in 1853) and one or two sons who died in infancy. He himself died in 1818.

[13] Samuel (1756–1794) married Sarah, daughter of Comfort Sage of Middletown, in August 1780, and by her had four children—all girls. The year following her death in 1791, he married Hope, the widow of William Warner, also of Middletown. A master mariner in the West Indies trade, Samuel was lost on a homeward passage from Santo Domingo in 1794.

[14] Thomas, Sr., was requested in 1739 to sit apart with Mr. Macon to lead the singing and he was one of the committee to revise the Psalms of David for the Brattle Street Church in 1753. In 1754 and 1756 either he or Thomas, Jr., was paid for singing in King's Chapel, though one suspects that the son was meant because the father, successful in business and a leader of his own church, would hardly be interested in the pound a week paid in 1754 or the two shillings eight pence a week paid in 1756. For a young man of twenty-four, however, this would have been a welcome addition to his income. Thomas, Jr., is also said to have been an organist, though no primary evidence of this has come to hand. See Henry Wilder Foote, *Annals of King's Chapel* (Boston: 1896).

Christ Church (the Old North) to replace one which had been imported sixteen years earlier and it was specified that the new organ was to have "an echo equal to that of Trinity Church." Although Thomas took six years to complete the organ (having meanwhile built a smaller one for St. Peter's in Salem[15]), it was worth waiting for, remaining in use until 1886. No doubt the Johnston boys had watched their father's organs in process of construction and the elder Johnston may have seized this golden opportunity to give his sons a second profession in the event they might one day need it. We shall see that William did become a church organist and was able thereby to augment very considerably his income from portrait painting.

So much for William's background and family relationships.[16] The earliest reference to his independent career is contained in a letter he wrote to Copley from Barbados in 1770.[17] From this we learn that Johnston had been in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, twice—though in what years or for how long or to what purpose he does not say, except that during his first stay there he considered it his place of residence (which means how long? six months? a year? two years?) and that his second visit occurred a year and a half after his first departure. From certain Portsmouth-connected influences which William Sawitzky had observed in Johnston's portraits, Susan Sawitzky has concluded that the artist's first stay in Portsmouth probably extended from the

[15] The organ he built for St. Peter's was completed in 1754, sold in 1818 to St. Michael's of Marblehead, and, when it was taken down in 1883, was found to be signed on an ivory plate: "Thomas Johnston Fecit Boston Nov-Anglorum 1754."

[16] A résumé of the family of Thomas Johnston, Sr. (1708–1767), follows: By his first wife, Rachel (1705–1746?, daughter of John Thwing), he had eight children: (1) Thomas, Jr. (1731–1776?); (2) William (1732–1772), who married, 1766, Christian Bruce, widow of Alexander; (3) Samuel (1734–died before 1739); (4) Sarah (1736–1784), who married, 1759, Wensley Hobby and had five children; (5) Samuel (1739–died before 1756); (6) Benjamin (1740–1818), who married, 1770, Anne Stickney and had six children; (7) Martha (1745– ?); (8) Rachel (1746?–1801), who married, 1764, Daniel Rea II and had twelve children.

By his second wife, Bathsheba (1725–1792, daughter of Benjamin Thwing and later the wife of Samuel Phillips Savage of Boston), he had three children: (9) James (a mariner in 1772); (10) John (1752–1818), who married, 1773, Martha Spear and had six children; (11) Samuel (1756–1794), who married first, 1780, Sarah Sage and had two children, and second, 1792, Hope Warner, widow of William.

[17] Quoted in full below.

latter part of 1759 to the beginning of 1761 and that his second visit took place about the middle of 1762.[18] Copley thought that Johnston had worked while there on a certain coat of arms which Copley wished to locate, but in his reply William denies this and suggests that the coat of arms might have been given to Mr. Parker "who was at that time my partner." This was during Johnston's first and longer residence at Portsmouth, but of his partner or their articles of agreement we know nothing.[19] When he visited there a year and a half later Johnston "put up at Captn Pearsons," who lived at the corner of Daniel and Penhallow Streets.[20] Presumably both visits were primarily for the purpose of seeking and executing portrait commissions, but since no advertisements can be found for him (or for any Parker who was not a merchant) either in the *New Hampshire Gazette* or in the other New England papers of the 1750s and '60s, we can only conclude that he was passed from sitter to sitter by word of mouth and on the showing of his work.

A chronology of the places where Johnston worked during the remainder of the 1760s must await the publication of the

[18] Information from Mrs. William Sawitzky.

[19] It is possible that Mr. Parker was in a similar line of work to that of Thomas Johnston, and that William went to him as a sort of partner-assistant. Parker may have had a large rush order and needed a trained craftsman. There would have been no better place to apply for this kind of aid than to the Johnstons, whose shop was staffed by most competent men. To be sure, none of the Parkers in Portsmouth at the time seem to fit this description, but we must accept Johnston's own statement of his existence. John Parker, Jr., who, with Nathaniel Adams, made a survey and map of Portsmouth in 1778 and who is known to have done miniatures, was a generation younger than William. Whoever Parker may have been, he was still in Portsmouth when William made his second visit, for William's letter to Copley indicates that there was conversation between them on that occasion. The author expresses her thanks for courtesies extended during the course of this research by Miss Marion G. Call of the Portsmouth Historical Society.

[20] There was only one recognized tavern in Portsmouth at the time. It was built in 1743 by Paul March and was known first as the Widow Slayton's and then as the Bell Tavern. John Birket in his travels through America in 1751 stayed at Captain Pearson's as did Johnston when he was in Portsmouth. Whether the Captain took paying guests without actually running a tavern, or whether he was overly hospitable does not appear from the record, but both of these gentlemen spoke of staying there as one would speak of staying at a hotel. It does not seem that they were entertained as friends. The Captain died in 1752, but it is likely that his widow continued to take paying guests and that the house was still referred to as "Captain Pearson's." See Charles W. Brewster, *Rambles about Portsmouth* (Portsmouth: 1859); *Some Cursory Remarks made by James Birket* (New Haven: 1916).

catalogue raisonnée of his work which Mrs. Sawitzky is preparing from her husband's notes and her subsequent researches. We do have evidence that he worked in New London in 1762–1763, in Hartford and New Haven in 1763–1764,[20a] and in the other Connecticut towns suggested by Mrs. Sawitzky's checklist during the same years. And he may have worked in Boston.

It was there that William married Christy Bruce on December 2, 1766. The marriage was performed by the minister of the Brattle Street Church. Christy, born Christian Hayboth, had married Alexander Bruce in 1760 and had two children by him.[21] There is no record of Bruce's death, nor have we any information about his occupation. Since the children were baptised in the Brattle Street Church, presumably the Bruces were living somewhere in the neighborhood of the Johnstons. William's marriage seems to have been of brief duration, for less than three and a half years later he was living in Barbados—alone. The evidence for this is his letter from that place to Copley, May 4, 1770. In it, though complimenting that artist on his recent marriage, he made no mention of his own wife or her little daughters, as he surely would have done had they been with him, nor did he mention them in his 1772 will, but on the contrary left his entire estate to his "dear and loving friend Rachael Beckles" of Barbados to whom (as the evidence suggests) he may have been betrothed.[22] There is no record in Boston of Christy's death, nor of those of her two daughters, but neither has any trace of them turned up in Barbados. Two possible alternatives present themselves. Christy and both of the girls may have died in Boston soon after the marriage, or Christy may have died and her family

[20a] Johnston wrote to his father from New London in 1762 (letter now at the Massachusetts Historical Society): "I have considerable Business Engag'd at New Haven, so that if my health is continued, I've a good prospect before me."—Quoted in "William Johnston, Portrait Painter, 1732–1772," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin,* October 1954, pp. 97–102, 108, which also contains documentary proof of Johnston's activities as an artist in Hartford at that period.

[21] They were: Mary Bruce, entered on her baptismal record of 1761 as daughter of *Christian;* and Elizabeth Bruce, baptised in 1764 as the daughter of Alexander and *Christina.*

[22] All facts of Johnston's Barbados life were supplied by the Barbados Museum and Historical Society.

or the Bruces may have taken the children from their new stepfather to care for them. In any case his wife's untimely death offers one likely reason for his pulling up stakes and leaving the land of his birth.

An additional severance of his home roots is suggested by the fact that, when his father died in 1767, the family business was taken over (seemingly to William's chagrin) by his brother-in-law, Daniel Rea II, whom his sister Rachel had married in 1764. Rea, who had been apprenticed to the elder Johnston, went into partnership with his father-in-law and on his death bought out the firm.[23] William may well have resented being thus squeezed out of the family business and seemingly thereafter cut himself off from further relations with his sister Rachel. This conclusion is supported by the fact that, in his letter to Copley from Barbados in 1770, William made a point of speaking of his sister Sarah (Mrs. Hobby) as "an *only* Sister of mine," although, as Copley must have known, Rachel Rea was still living in Boston (she outlived her brother by nearly thirty years). The distastefulness of this conjectured family quarrel, plus the loss of his wife Christy, could easily have been the determining factor in a resolve to start life anew in a different environment.

There is a large and fascinating field of speculation to graze in as to why William chose Barbados as his place of retreat and renewal. None of it can be proved, and so we are free to make our choice. In April 1766 Peter [Pelham?[24]] wrote to Copley from Barbados ("alias Garden of Eden," as he called it) of the hospitality and generosity and politeness of the people there. He reported that the place had only one painter and that he (Peter) was thinking of setting up in competition, being sure he could do as well "if the charcoal was good." He even suggested, though in no very serious vein, that Copley himself come there and set

[23] The account books of Daniel Rea, Sr., and the firm of Rea and Johnston, which provide so much information concerning this relationship, are owned by the Baker Library, Harvard School of Business Administration.

[24] So identified in the Massachusetts Historical Society's edition of the Copley-Pelham correspondence (see note 25) where the letter is printed. The late John Marshall Phillips of Yale University is reported by Mrs. Sawitzky to have identified the author of this letter as more probably Peter Chardon who died in Boston in 1775.

up in business. Copley may have handed this suggestion on to William, to whom this open field in a new world must have appealed most strongly after Christy died (as we must suppose she did) and after the change in the family business made bad blood between William and the Reas (as we have surmised). From the tone and substance of William's letter to Copley, as we shall see, it appears that William had settled in Barbados some considerable time before 1770.

Since this letter throws so much light on Johnston's life and character and, in the absence of more specific records, is the source of many of our conjectures about him, it must be quoted at length:[25]

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 6th. Jan'y I recd. and setting the motive aside from which it was wrote, be assured it gave me much pleasure; could I promise myself success, I would petition for a continuance of your favors. I will at a Venture. It is the humble request of your friend Will: that as often as opportunity presents, and your time cannot be better employ'd that you convey a few sentiments, which will ever be agreeable and most gratefully received, as coming from my friend Copley.

I could wish to give you a more satisfactory account of the arms you are in search of, I well remember the talk of such a thing, but it was never carried into Execution, to my knowledge, for be assur'd I never had it possession in my life. It might possibly have been given to Mr. Parker who was at that time my partner. I was at Portsmouth a year and a half after I left it as the place of my residence, and put up at Captn Pearsons; no mention was ever made of it at that time. If I had had it I should have done it and return'd them both, for of what service could they be to me. You say that the Arms consisted of three Lions and a Stag for the Crest, if the arms are so well remember'd, the Loss is happily mitigated. I am sorry for the Loss of the other, if there was any particular Value put upon it, but cannot charge myself with having been instrumental to such a misfortune.

The next thing to be considered, I think is the boiling of oil, the purity of which article much inhances its Value. A few words would explain to you what you desire, but I choose to be methodical, for when method is strictly observ'd, we are not so apt to shake hands with Reason.

Now Sir the common practice of boiling oil among Common Painters;

[25] Printed with the kind permission of the Massachusetts Historical Society from their publication: *Letters and Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham 1739–1776* (Boston: 1914).

observe I say Common Painters, for what I am now about communicate is a knowledge you do not want to come at; but that knowledge which you would wish to be inform[ed] of, or made perfect in, is to me equally easie and shall be communicated in a future paragraph. You now undoubtedly expect to be inform'd of the Common Painters method of boiling of oil, as I observ'd to you before altho it is not a knowledge you are any ways curious about, yet I have promis'd and must abide by it; from this Principle, that the complying with Engagements is not only a Duty, but a Virtue, which every one should cherish, and hold in the highest Veneration. Now Sir this said information may not and I dare [say] is not altogether so neigh as you may imagine, for a thought has Just popt into my head, the bear Idea of which, affords me such pleasure, that I cannot indulge you with my promise till I have committed to writeing. It is this, the great satisfaction it would give me to have a painting of my friend Copley's Head Either in Crayons or oil, in miniature or what ever way will be most agreable to him. I should wish to have it very like, but to be sure of that I need only to desire it may be done by himself. I say the Common painters method is this, the Common painters method of what? you are quite right indeed, to ask what, for I really like to have blunder'd, but it must have occur'd to you from what would have follow'd that the boilg. of oil was what I meant. Well then (for we will be very Carefull this time) the Common painters method of boiling oil is this. Take any given quantity of Oil put into an Iron pott, throw into it, a little red Lead put it over the fire, and let it boil till such times as the froth subsides, which is the Indication of its being boil'd Eno. Some indeed try it with a feather; when it is sufficiently Boil'd it will scorch the Feather. Although this method does not alter the Quality of Dryg. which is all they want, yet it has not the property the other method gives it, for instead of its being return'd to you Very black (which is ever the case from the Common method of boilg.) it will be return'd to you as pure as you put it in, and will hold its colour, and that in fact is what you are in pursuit of.

Really, Sir, what I promised you in a future paragraph was design'd for this place, but upon sudden recollection find that the mark as well as the word signifies the beginning of a new subject; a new subject let it be and confine the other to a new sentence. Mrs Hobby is an only Sister of mine, not intirely unknown to you; and such is my affection for her, I should be very glad to have her picture in miniature, in water colours or oil, which you please tho: I must confess should like to have it in water Colours, for this reason, because there are several pictures in this Island lately arriv'd from England, that are much thought of, so far inferior to some I have seen of my friends, that they can never be nam'd with them, and to convince them it is not mere boast should be glad to have [it] as soon as you can conveniently do it. What ever your price is shall be remitted to you in specie, or anything you may Fancy from this Island. Pray oblige me in this request. I think there was a picture done of

Mr Dipper:[26] done in small life and given to Harry Liddle if you will give me a copy of it in black and white Chalk, Just the head; or with a black lead pencil. I want it for a Lady, you shall receive a compensation beyond your desires.

I have been in some parts of this letter, a little bordering upon the Shandean stile, that it should meet you on a Cloudy day, or when the weather had for some time been disagreable, brought on a langour and depression of spirits, to rouze you and make you forget the malady you then Labour'd under.

Now seriously to answer your request. Take a Glaz'd pipkin, made long in shape thus. [*Here followed a crude sketch of a pipkin*] let it depend from the trammel into a Kettle of water, if you have a mind to force the drying property, you grind a little Vitriol or sugar of lead, and stir into it before it grows hot. this method will take 6 hours at least, the water boiling all the time. I have put the Oil sometimes immediately into the water which method will render the oils as white as the water itself, but in the boiling so divides the oil into numberless Globles that it is a considerable time before it will unite sufficiently to get any great matter from the water.

The other will answer to your wishes.

NB never fill the Vessell with oil above two thirds full.

I see by the papers you have chang'd your condition, and have taken to yourself a wife. I have [not] the pleasure of knowing your Lady by sight; but from the Charracter of that family in general, you must be the happy Man. I sincerely wish you both every happiness you promis'd yourselves, or that your hearts can desire; it is customary upon wishing a new married Couple Joy to salute, but as this must be done by proxie, I cant with propriety employ a better hand than yourself; please to make a kiss acceptable to your Lady till such time as I can have the Honor of doing in *Propria Persona.* Well adieu, God bless you; write me as often as you can, and dont forget the News of the place you live in, and which I have so great a regard for. my kind regards to your Lady accept the same yourself and believe me to be with truth and sincerity Dear Sir

Your affectionate friend, and Very Humble Servant

Wm. Johnston.

P.S. Inclos'd is a pencil to assist you in the miniature. I forgot to tell you I have an Organists Birth worth £75 Sterl'g per Ann.

Whatever you have to send me: if there should not be any Vessell in Boston for this place forward them to Mr. Hobby at Middletown Connecticutt. If there should be a Vessel in Boston for Barbados, Direct for me to be left at the Attorney Generals Office. I Veyow, I had like to have

[26] This was probably Thomas Dipper, organist at King's Chapel (see note 27). Harry Liddle was a prominent member of the church.

forget one thing. I want a rough sketch of that little picture that is over the door of Mr Chardon's Hall, Time bringing truth to Light.

We have already presented several deductions from William's letter: (1) The probability that his wife had died, for, while his nicely put congratulations on Copley's marriage to Susanah Clarke strike a pleasant note of intimacy with the groom and compliment the lady whom he does not know, he makes no mention of his own wife with whom Copley surely had been acquainted. (2) The seeming rift with his sister Rachel and her husband Daniel Rea both of whom he disowns in referring to Mrs. Hobby as his *only* sister. And (3) the fact that the tone and substance of his letter indicate that he had been in Barbados for a considerable time when he wrote. He does ask for news of Boston, but not in a way that shows any homesickness or even loneliness. Copley's letter received January 9th and Johnston's reply of May 4th could hardly have been the first exchange of correspondence between them after Johnston's move to Barbados, else Copley would have inquired about the voyage and conditions in the island and Johnston would have made some mention of his arrival or of his mode of living there. There had been for a long time close connections between Boston and the West Indies and a certain amount of imigration to the islands. It seems a little strange that there was not some family who would have known the Copleys or Pelhams or some of their circle on whom William might have commented; but if letters had been exchanged more or less frequently over a period of a year or two, this becomes an entirely natural omission. We must therefore conclude that William came to Barbados from Boston sometime in the late 1760s.

The letter also reveals something of Johnston's mind and character. It shows him to have been a reasonable and just man. His simple declaration of freedom from responsibility for the coat of arms is very sensible, and the sincerity of his regrets is obvious, though he feels he is in the right and therefor dismisses the matter. The rather heavy humor over the boiling of oil seems to us tedious, but it is no more than much of the wit of the day.

And William does what many letter writers of his day sometimes failed to do: he finally completes the thought—in fact does so doubly. It is rather generous of him to give Copley both methods of preparing oil, for the second and superior one might well have been his own discovery, or one made in the exacting japanning process which he might have preferred not to divulge.

The information that William was an organist is especially interesting, since the musical interest of the family as well as the artistic one was, as we have seen, an inheritance from the father. If our belief that William and Copley had been corresponding for some time is justified, then we must assume that William's appointment as organist was really a piece of news and that it had taken place rather recently. His £75 salary was not excessive, but still it was more than King's Chapel had paid its organist in 1757.[27] With this as a supplement to his income from portrait painting, he might do very well. We know from the Shaw receipt that he charged £9 for three-quarter-length portraits, so that a mere dozen commissions a year, plus his church salary, would have netted him a comfortable living. True, Copley made twice that much, but he considered his 300-guinea income of 1768 "a pretty living for America" and by 1771 was able to build himself a handsome house on Mount Vernon and to have it furnished in grand style and his large lot beautifully landscaped—the estate, in fact, of a well-to-do gentleman. William was organist at St. George's which is one of the parishes adjoining St. Michael's where he is buried. How long he held this position is uncertain, for the vestry minutes of the parish for that period have disappeared, but the burial record refers to him as late organist at St. George's.

William died on August 14 or 15, 1772, and was buried on the latter day in the parish churchyard of St. Michael. We do not know the cause of death, but he was so ill that when he made

[27] In April 1757 King's Chapel voted to retain Thomas Dipper as organist at £53.6.8 per annum. When he gave notice of his intention to leave for Jamaica, a committee was appointed to secure an organist from England to take his place. But Dipper changed his plans and remained in Boston. See Henry Wilder Foote, *Annals of King's Chapel* (Boston: 1896).

his will on the 14th it had to be signed with his mark. As is always true, we learn a great deal about the man from his will. First and most important, he leaves all "my estate both real and personal that I shall die possessed of or entitled to in this island and also my books, bookdebts [money owing to him on his accounts], papers and pictures now by me either finished or unfinished to my dear and loving friend Rachael Beckles of the parish of Christ Church to her and her heirs for ever she paying all my just debts and funeral expenses." Rachael and her two half brothers, Richard of Christ Church and Robert of St. Michael's, were named the executors.

This Beckles family was prominent in Barbados life. Rachael was just about Johnston's age, the daughter of Hon. Thomas Beckles of Barbados by his third wife, Margaret Ince. She died unmarried in August 1796 and it seems quite probable that she and Johnston were betrothed. At her death she left her property to her neice Mary Ann Beckles or to her nephew John Beckles, children of her half brother Robert. Where the pictures went after her death is yet to be determined. They may still be in the islands, or they may have gone to England with a later generation, or— horrible thought!—they may have been destroyed. The paintings are not known in Barbados as being by Johnston, but it is to be hoped that the publication of those known in the United States may bring about the identification of works of his Barbados period.[28]

Notices of Johnston's death appeared in both the Boston and New London papers. On October 1, 1772, the *Boston News Letter* reported: "Wm. Johnston, portrait painter, formerly of Boston, son of the late Mr. Thomas Johnston, Japanner, died suddenly at Bridge Town in Barbados." A week later, October 9th, the *New London Gazette* said: "Died suddenly at Bridgtown, in Barbados, Mr. William Johnston, Portrait Painter, who formerly carried on his Business in this Town."

[28] E. M. Shilstone, Honorary Secretary of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, has provided the information on the Barbados period of Johnston's life in a series of letters for which I am most grateful.

THE PORTRAITS OF WILLIAM JOHNSTON

A PRELIMINARY CHECKLIST

by SUSAN SAWITZKY

WILLIAM SAWITZKY'S book on "The Works of William Johnston with Notes on Associated Painters," now in process of completion by Susan Sawitzky,[1] will contain a critical essay presenting Mr. Sawitzky's observations and opinions concerning Johnston's portraits and the apparent connections which existed between Blackburn, young Copley, and Johnston; a catalogue raisonnée of Johnston's works; and a chronology of the artist's life compiled from three sources: (1) the proof of Johnston's identity as the painter of this group of portraits which was discovered by Lila Parrish Lyman among the manuscripts and paintings of the New London Historical Society in January 1952 and her article on his life published in this *Quarterly*[2]; (2) the interesting mass of circumstantial evidence, constituting all but direct proof of Johnston's authorship of these paintings, which was discovered by Newton C. Brainard, President, and Thomas R. Harlow, Director, of the Connecticut Historical Society, from 1949 to 1954; and (3) such suggestions and clues concerning the artist's movements and relationships as

[1] Other volumes in William Sawitzky's intended series which are also being completed by Mrs. Sawitzky include his books on Ralph Earl, Reuben Moulthrop, and Three Eighteenth-Century New York Artists.

[2] Lila Parrish Lyman's researches concerning William Johnston's life, and my studies in completing and substantiating my husband's opinions, theories, and ideas as to Johnston's work and associations, have been carried on in a sort of loose collaboration which has been most pleasant and mutually helpful. It was originally intended that her discovery, made in January 1952, proving William Johnston to be the painter of the portrait of Lucretia (Harris) Shaw and, incidentally, of the other portraits which William Sawitzky had grouped with it in the 1930s, together with her sketch of the artist's life, should be included in William Sawitzky's forthcoming volume. But the impending Catalogue of the possessions of the New London County Historical Society, the interesting collection of indirect evidence found by Newton C. Brainard and Thompson R. Harlow of the Connecticut Historical Society, and the current first exhibition of William Johnston's portraits presented under his name on the strength of this convincing evidence, made it seem necessary to publish her discovery without further delay. I wish to thank her for her generosity and modesty in deferring its publication to this time, and for her assistance and coöperation in every way.

RALPH (1741–1799) AND MRS. (MARY PERIT, 1741–1816) ISAACS
By William Johnston, New Haven, Conn., *c.* 1763
Owner: New Haven Colony Historical Society

were observed by William Sawitzky in the actual portraits by Johnston and his contemporaries.

Following is William Sawitzky's checklist of a group of New England portraits of the 1760s, recently discovered to be the work of William Johnston, plus the portraits later attributed by other students and accepted by Susan Sawitzky as belonging to the same group. Mr. Sawitzky was the first person to recognize the stylistic and technical relationships between these portraits and to assemble them into a group as the work of a single hand.[3] This was begun by him in the summer of 1932 and, with the exception of four portraits attributed by him through photographs in 1944, his list was made during the 1930s. Of the twenty-nine portraits now located or known through photographs to be from Johnston's brush, nineteen were first attributed to this group by William Sawitzky. Four others, not located, are shown by contemporary documents to have been quite probably painted by him. The total of thirty-three portraits which thus constitute

[3] See Note 1 in checklist entry 11, below.

the presently known body of Johnston's work are listed chronologically below in the tentative order of their production.

[1] DR. HALL JACKSON (1739–1797).
Painted at: Portsmouth, N.H. 1760? (or 1762?).
Owner: Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Formerly believed to be the work of John Singleton Copley. Attributed in 1951 to this group of portraits by Barbara Neville Parker, Curator of American Painting, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Mass., and co-author with Anne Bolling Wheeler of *John Singleton Copley* (Boston: 1938). Since the portrait of Dr. Jackson comes from a different locality and is apparently of a slightly earlier date than the other examples in this group, Mrs. Parker's attribution seems particularly noteworthy.

[2] DAVID GARDINER, JR. (1742– ?).
Painted at: New London, Conn., 1762? (or 1763?).
Owner: Unlocated.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in July 1944, together with the following portrait of his sister Mary, from photographs sent to him by Mrs. William C. Hart of Williamstown, Mass., a direct descendant of Mary. Mrs. Hart had been given the photographs by an uncle many years before, but the whereabouts of the two paintings were unknown to her and have not since been discovered.

[3] MARY GARDINER (1744–1824), later Mrs. Thomas Coit.
Painted at: New London, Conn., 1762? (or 1763?).
Owner: Unlocated.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in July 1944, from a photograph. (See remarks under entry 2.)

[4] SARAH DESHON (1752–?), married Captain Samuel Wheat in 1770.
Painted at: New London, Conn., 1762? (or 1763?).
Owner: Lyman Allyn Museum, New London, Conn.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed, about 1944, by William Douglas, then Director of the Lyman Allyn Museum, to the then-unidentified painter of the portraits of Lucretia and Mary Shaw in the New London County Historical Society (see entries 11 and 13).

[5] REVEREND NAPHTALI DAGGETT? (1727–1780).
Painted at: New Haven, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in November 1937.
Note: If the subject is correctly identified, a portrait of Sarah (Smith) Daggett (1729–1772) was probably also painted by Johnston.

[6] ABIGAIL (TAYLOR) WOOLSEY (1695–1771), widow of Reverend Benjamin Woolsey.
Painted at: Stamford?, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Mrs. Salisbury Woolsey, New Haven, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky, April 24, 1935.

[7] RALPH ISAACS (1741–1799).
Painted at: New Haven, Conn., "March 7," 1763? A letter held in the sitter's hand is inscribed: "Isaacs/March 7/Plea[Nev]v Haven."
Owner: New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in 1935.

[8] MARY (PERIT) ISAACS (1741–1816), wife of Ralph Isaacs.
Painted at: New Haven, Conn., February? or March? 1763?
Owner: New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in 1935.

[9] THOMAS MUMFORD V (1728–1799).
Painted at: Groton Centre, Conn., "20th March 1763." A letter on which the sitter's arm rests is inscribed: "Groton 20th March 1763."
Owner: Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed to this group of portraits by James Thomas Flexner in 1951 while it was temporarily at the Old Print Shop, New York City.

[10] CATHERINE (HAVENS) MUMFORD (1735–1778), wife of Thomas Mumford V.
Painted at: Groton Centre, Conn., March? 1763.
Owner: Mrs. George de Boketon Greene, New York City and Cherry Valley, N.Y.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed to this group of portraits by James Thomas Flexner in 1951 while it was temporarily at the Old Print Shop, New York City.

[11] LUCRETIA (HARRIS) ROGERS SHAW (1737–1781), wife of Nathaniel Shaw, Jr.
Painted at: New London, Conn., March or April, 1763. The artist's bill to her husband is dated "April 11, 1763."
Owner: New London County Historical Society, New London, Conn.
Attribution: This portrait and the one of her sister-in-law, Mary Shaw, were the first paintings by William Johnston to be seen by William Sawitzky and became the "key" portraits around which he assembled other examples by the same hand (see entry 18, Note 1). His notes contain the following reference to these Shaw portraits: "Seen: 7–3–'32 and 6–19–'35. On wall, fair daylight."

Note 1: The first positive proof that William Johnston was the painter of a definite, extant, and located portrait of this series was found by Lila Parrish Lyman in January 1952 while cataloguing the manuscripts in the possession of the New London County Historical Society. This was Johnston's bill to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., dated "April 11, 1763," for painting portraits of his "Lady and Son." The portrait of Lucretia Shaw, to which it refers, now owned by the Historical Society, has, with few disturbances, hung since its painting on the walls of the Shaw mansion, which houses the Society's collections.

Note 2: Counter to precedent, but through the generous coöperation of Mr. Frank Valentine Chappel, then President of the New London County Historical Society, and of Mrs. Dwight (Lila Parrish) Lyman, the portraits of Lucretia and Mary Shaw were taken down from the walls of the Society at the request of Susan Sawitzky. Her examination of the canvases revealed the initials "W.J." painted on the back of the frame of Lucretia Shaw's portrait, whether by the artist or by another hand it is impossible to know. This additional bit of corroborative evidence, the significance of which had apparently never before been recognized, served to establish the fact beyond reasonable question that this portrait was the one referred to in Johnston's bill to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr.

Note 3: Had a similar request to examine the pictures off the wall, made by William Sawitzky in the 1930s, been granted, it would have enabled him to infer, with all but certainty, the identity of the artist at that time, as the recorded name of William Johnston as a portrait painter was known to him. It would, furthermore, have explained the influences of Blackburn and Copley, so vividly remarked by William Sawitzky, though the examples known to him were exclusively painted in Connecticut.

Note 4: Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., was the most prominent citizen in New London during his mature years, yet no portrait of him has ever come to light. There is no reference in Johnston's bill to a portrait of Nathaniel Shaw himself.

[12] JOSIAH ROGERS (1756–1764), son of Mrs. Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., by her first husband, Captain Josiah Rogers.
Painted at: New London, Conn., March or April, 1763.
Owner: Unlocated.
Note: The artist's bill to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., for portraits of his "Lady and Son" is dated "April 11, 1763." Josiah was Nathaniel Shaw's apparently beloved stepson, who lived in his home and died there in 1764 at the age of eight.

[13] MARY SHAW (1751–1775), later Mrs. Ephraim Woodbridge.
Painted at: New London, Conn., April? or June? 1763?
Owner: New London County Historical Society, New London, Conn.
Attribution: This portrait and the one of her sister-in-law, Lucretia Shaw

(see entry 11), were the first paintings by William Johnston to be seen by William Sawitzky and became the "key" portraits around which he assembled other examples by the same hand (see entry 18, Note 1). His notes contain the following reference to these Shaw portraits: "Seen: 7–3–'32 and 6–19–'35. On wall, fair daylight."

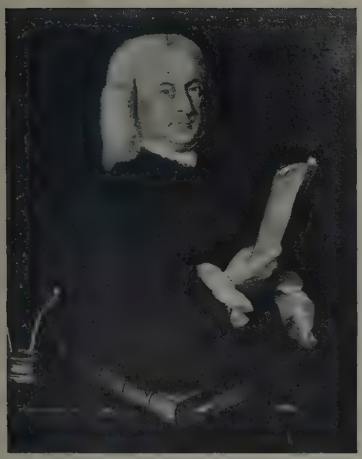
[14] THOMAS MUMFORD III (1687–1765?).
Painted at: Groton Bank, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Mrs. George de Boketon Greene, New York City and Cherry Valley N.Y.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed to this group of portraits by James Thomas Flexner in 1951 while it was temporarily at the Old Print Shop, New York City.

[15] HANNAH (REMINGTON) MUMFORD (1687–1781), wife of Thomas Mumford III.
Painted at: Groton Bank, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Mrs. George de Boketon Greene, New York City and Cherry Valley, N.Y.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky on September 23, 1936, from a photograph in the possession of the Newport Historical Society, Newport, R.I.

[16] DAVID GARDINER, SR. (1718–1779).
Printed at: New London, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Mrs. William C. Hart, Williamstown, Mass.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in July 1944 (as were those of his wife and two children, *q.v.*), from photographs sent to him by Mrs. Hart, owner of this portrait and its companion-piece. Both paintings were examined by Susan Sawitzky in 1951.

[17] ELIZABETH (GARDINER) GARDINER (1721–1772), wife of David Gardiner, Sr.
Painted at: New London, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Mrs. William C. Hart, Williamstown, Mass.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in July 1944 from a photograph. (See remarks in entry 16.)

[18] JABEZ HAMLIN (1709–1791).
Painted at: Middletown?, Conn., 1763?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in the summer or early autumn of 1932.
Note 1: At this time (1932) the numerous portraits in the collection of the Connecticut Historical Society were hung, wired one to another, from the high ceiling of the old Society building, and all but the



DAVID GARDINER, SR. (1718–1779)

By William Johnston, *c.* 1763

Owner: Mrs. William C. Hart

ABIGAIL WOOLSEY (1695–1771)

By William Johnston, *c.* 1763

Owner: Mrs. Salisbury Woolsey

lowest were inaccessible to examination. William Sawitzky, however, obtained permission from the then-Director, Mr. Bates, to have them removed, disentangled and, later, restrung, and spent several happily absorbed days in going over this remarkably interesting collection of early Connecticut painting. The nucleus of the series now known to be the work of William Johnston was assembled by William Sawitzky, for the first time, during this examination, around the "key" portraits of Lucretia and Mary Shaw seen by him a month or two earlier on the walls of the New London County Historical Society (see entries 11 and 13).

Note 2: No portrait, or specific reference to one, of Abigail (Chauncey) Hamlin (1717–1768), third wife of Jabez Hamlin and daughter of the Reverend Nathaniel and Sarah (Judson) Chauncey of Durham, Conn., has so far been found. It would seem likely, however, that Johnston painted her likeness as well as those of her husband, brother, and sister-in-law, and that through the Hamlins the following two portraits (entries 19 and 20) were commissioned.

Note 3: Having finished his work in New London and New Haven, and turned inland toward Hartford, Johnston probably went first directly to Middleton where his sister Sarah (Mrs. Wensley Hobby), her husband and family made their home. Johnston seems to have been on particularly affectionate terms with this family and was doubtless visiting them when he painted the portrait of Hamlin.

[19] ELNATHAN CHAUNCEY (1724–1796), a younger brother of Mrs. Jabez Hamlin.

Painted at: Durham? or Middleton?, Conn., 1763?

Owner: Miss Emily H. Chauncey, New York City.

Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed about 1951 to this group of portraits by Professor John Marshall Phillips (died May 7, 1953), late Director of the Yale Art Gallery and Curator of the Garvan Collection.

Note: This portrait and its companion-piece (entry 20) have, unfortunately, been heavily overpainted.

[20] ELIZABETH (WORTHINGTON) GALE CHAUNCEY (*c.* 1730–1793), wife of Elnathan Chauncey.

Painted at: Durham? or Middletown?, Conn., 1763?

Owner: Miss Emily H. Chauncey, New York City.

Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed about 1951 to this group of portraits by Professor John Marshall Phillips (died May 7, 1953), late Director of the Yale Art Gallery and Curator of the Garvan Collection.

[21] CHARLES CALDWELL (*c.* 1732–1801).

Painted at: Hartford, Conn., September or October? 1763?

Owner: Art Museum, New Britain Institute, New Britain, Conn.

Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed to this group of portraits by Robert C. Vose, Boston, Mass., in 1954.

Note: The letter shown in the hand of the subject is addressed: "Messrs Ch & Geo: Caldwell/Hartford," who, according to Thompson R. Harlow, Director of the Connecticut Historical Society, were merchants of Hartford "who sold to dealers throughout the state large quantities of beaver hats." Mr. Harlow found in an account book kept by Charles Caldwell, now in the possession of the Society, an entry dated "Sepr 1763" which charges to the account of "Wm Johnston Limner Dr/To 1 Beavr Hatt [£] 1:12/To my order on Fanning [£] 7:10." The total of these amounts (£9:2) is, as Mr. Harlow points out, approximately what Johnston charged for a single portrait, so that it can reasonably be assumed that the debt was pleasantly cancelled in this way. This coincidence of account with portrait was one of the strongest pieces of circumstantial evidence found by Mr. Harlow that Johnston was the author of this and the other portraits of the group.

[22] RALPH POMEROY (1737–1819).

Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1763? or 1764?

Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.

Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in the summer or early autumn of 1932 (see entry 18, Note 1).

ELEAZER W. (1739–1783) AND MRS. (MARY WYLLYS, 1742–1805) POMEROY

By William Johnston (1732–1772), Hartford, Conn., *c.* 1763 or 1764

Owner: Mrs. Joseph Wright Alsop IV

[23] ELEAZER WHEELOCK POMEROY (1739–1783).
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Mrs. Joseph Wright Alsop IV, Avon, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky, June 25, 1935.

[24] MARY (WYLLYS) POMEROY (1741/2–1805), wife of Eleazer Wheelock Pomeroy.
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Mrs. Joseph Wright Alsop IV, Avon, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky, June 25, 1935.

[25] MARGARET (BEAUCHAMP) CHENEVARD (1707/8–1783), widow of John Michael Chenevard.
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in the summer or early autumn of 1932 (see entry 18, Note 1).

[26] REVEREND ELNATHAN WHITMAN (1708/9–1777).
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky

in the summer or early autumn of 1932 (see entry 18, Note 1). It was previously supposed to be the work of John Trumbull.

[27] WILLIAM VERSTILLE (1757–1803).
Painted at: Wethersfield?, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Henry F. du Pont, Winterthur Museum, Delaware, Md.
Attribution: Known to William Sawitzky only from a poor reproduction of a much-retouched photograph in Alice Morse Earle's *Child Life in Colonial Days* (1899), from which it was impossible to form an opinion of the painting. Attributed to this group of portraits in 1947 by Ralph W. Thomas, Curator of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, New Haven, Conn., who was at that time owner of the picture.

[28] ASHBEL RILEY (1734–?).
Painted at: Wethersfield?, Conn., 1763? or 1764?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Not known to William Sawitzky. Attributed to William Johnston in 1953 by Thompson R. Harlow, Director of the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Note: This portrait was presented to the Society in 1953 and was included by Mr. Harlow, its Director, in the first "one man" exhibition of Johnston's work ever brought together (October 18, 1954, to January 15, 1955). Although Mr. Harlow had never found direct proof as to Johnston's authorship of this series of portraits, the circumstantial evidence was so convincing and came from so many different sources that no one can deny his justification in attaching the artist's name to his work without further apology. Mrs. Lyman's discovery of absolute evidence puts the seal of certainty on Mr. Harlow's convictions.

[29] THOMAS SEYMOUR II (1705–1767).
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1764.
Owner: Unlocated.
Note: The first clue connecting the name of William Johnston with this group of portraits was found in 1949 by Newton C. Brainard, President of the Connecticut Historical Society, while indexing a series of scrapbooks in its possession. This was a description (in a newspaper article written in 1871 by Edwin Pond Parker) of a manuscript book, now unlocated, of personal and family memoranda, accounts, etc., kept by Thomas Seymour II, of Hartford. Parker calls attention to an entry in these accounts which states "that Thomas Seymour paid William Johnston, in 1764, eighteen pounds for painting his picture and that of his lady Hepzibah Merrill." The fact that a portrait of Mary (Ledyard) Seymour, wife of Thomas Seymour III (see entry 32), owned by this Society, is an example of the group here under discussion led to the assumption that the unlocated portraits of her father-

and mother-in-law were probably by the same hand and, if so, that this series was the work of William Johnston. Though such an argument was, and should have been, taken tentatively until corroborated, subsequent evidence has proved it in this case to be correct.

[30] HEPHZIBAH (MERRILL) SEYMOUR (1712–1788), wife of Thomas Seymour II.
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1764.
Owner: Unlocated.
Note: See entry 29, Note.

[31] THOMAS SEYMOUR III (1735–1829).
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1764?
Owner: Unlocated.
Note: A portrait mentioned, with one of his wife, in the will of Thomas Seymour III was presumed by William Sawitzky to have been the probable pendant to the portrait of his wife (see entry 32) now owned by the Connecticut Historical Society and assigned by Mr. Sawitzky to this group. If the item in this will leaving to his daughter, Mary Juliana Chenevard, "all the Household Goods . . . remaining in my House . . . excepting thereout, the Portraits of her Parents" which he then bequeaths to his son Henry Seymour IV "with all the rest, residue, and remainder of my Estate real & personal" refers to the following portrait of his wife (see entry 32) and its companion-piece, then Thomas Seymour III was also painted by William Johnston. (The will is dated August 20, 1807, and its codicil October 15, 1821.)

[32] MARY (LEDYARD) SEYMOUR (1735–1807), wife of Thomas Seymour III.
Painted at: Hartford, Conn., 1764?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in the summer or early autumn of 1932 (see entry 18, Note 1).

[33] ELIPHALET DYER (1721–1807).
Painted at: Windham? or Hartford?, Conn., 1764?
Owner: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.
Attribution: Attributed to this group of portraits by William Sawitzky in the summer or early autumn of 1932 (see entry 18, Note 1).
Note 1: Eliphalet Dyer was sent to England by the Susquehanna Company in August 1763, which was probably just before Johnston's arrival at Hartford. Dyer returned to Connecitcut in 1764, when this portrait was more likely painted.
Note 2: Since Mrs. Eliphalet (Huldah Bowen) Dyer (1730–1800) was living at this time with her husband and children in Windham, Conn., it appears probable that Johnston also painted her portrait.

THE SOCIETY RECEIVES AN AWARD OF MERIT, NOVEMBER 19, 1954

Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian (at lectern), presenting to Dr. LeRoy E. Kimball, First Vice-President and acting chairman, a certificate of the Award of Merit granted to the Society by the American Association for State and Local History.

Seated, left to right: Mr. Edmund Astley Prentis, Trustee; Professor Allan Nevins; Mr. DeWitt M. Lockman, N.A., Recording Secretary; Dr. Fenwick Beekman, President; and Mr. William T. Van Alstyne, Domestic Corresponding Secretary.

THE SOCIETY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

ON FRIDAY afternoon, November 19th, the Society's year-long sesqui-centennial celebration culminated in a brilliant program of addresses and citations in the auditorium, followed by refreshments with music in the north rotunda. Though the hour and the weather conspired to discourage attendance, over three hundred distinguished guests and members, refusing to be frustrated, filled the auditorium.

Promptly at four, the attending officers and trustees escorted their guest-participants to the platform. Seated, left to right, in the front row were: Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian; Dr. LeRoy E. Kimball, First Vice-President; Professor Allan Nevins, the principal speaker; Dr. Fenwick Beekman, President; Rev. Dr. Edgar Franklin Romig, Senior Minister of the Collegiate Church of New York; and in the back row: Dr. R. W. G. Vail, Director; Dr. Thomas W. Streeter, Treasurer; Mr. Edmund Astley Prentis, Trustee; Mr. DeWitt M. Lockman, N. A., Recording Secretary; Mr. Forsyth Wickes, Third Vice-President; Mr. William T. Van Alstyne, Domestic Corresponding Secretary; Dr. Arthur H. Merritt, Trustee; and Mr. John E. Parsons, Trustee.

On the curtain behind this distinguished company hung the six-foot-wide transparency of the old City (Federal) Hall on Wall at Nassau Street where the Society had been founded, November 20, 1804, and maintained its quarters until 1809—a painting first unveiled to the members at their celebration of the semi-centennial of Washington's inauguration in 1839, when ex-President John Quincy Adams was the orator for the occasion, speaking on "The Jubilee of the Constitution." It was most appropriate that this early and decorative painting of the Society's first home should have formed the backdrop for the ceremonies marking its 150th birthday.

Dr. LeRoy E. Kimball, First Vice-President and member of the Committee on the Sesqui-Centennial, presided on behalf

of Mr. Charles E. Dunlap, Chairman of the Committee, who was kept away by an unfortunate illness. Dr. Kimball opened the meeting by introducing the Reverend Dr. Edgar Franklin Romig who offered the following invocation:

Almighty God, who by Thy grace hast brought us together, we bless Thee for the observances of this hour. We thank Thee that in honoring the founders of this Society we become the beneficiaries of their wisdom, their foresight, and their generous thought of others. As we think of the century and a half during which their spirit has been translated into service we acknowledge before Thee the good that this enterprise has been to the people of this city. Show us anew to reverence the past as a teacher without whose influence our future is but a stumbling. Accept our gratitude for the services of this institution today, to scholars, to citizens in their everyday walk, and to children. Endue those who carry on this work with strength and joy in their task. Bless the President of the United States and all who are in authority in this land. And now, O God, vouchsafe that all of us here, inspired by this celebration, may in gratitude dedicate ourselves to a better understanding of our city and our nation, new devotion to the common weal, and a resolute will to freedom, peace and brotherhood in the world. In Thy name we ask it. Amen.

Having extended a warm welcome to the guests and members present, the Acting Chairman informed them that Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian and past-President of The American Association for State and Local History, had come with tidings which promised to be highly gratifying. Dr. Corey then imparted the welcome news that The American Association for State and Local History, at its annual meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, on April 21, 1954, had voted its Award of Merit to this Society, with a citation as follows:

The American Association for State and Local History is pleased to recognize and commend the distinctive contribution of The New-York Historical Society in recognition of a century and a half of service to all those interested in preserving the history and culture of Greater New York; for establishing early and maintaining continuously the highest possible standards of scholarship in the field of local history.

Dr. Kimball received from Dr. Corey's hands, on behalf of the grateful Society, a certificate of the Association's Award of Merit bearing the citation just quoted.

He then took the occasion to congratulate the delightedly surprised Society on having just received a rare and longed-for gift—one which had always been wanting to supplement its far-famed collection of John James Audubon's original watercolors of American birds: a complete and perfectly preserved set of the Elephant Folio edition of his *Birds of America* (published in Edinburgh and London, 1826–1836), bound in four sumptuous volumes for the Duke of Newcastle, together with the five-volume companion set of Audubon's *Ornithological Biography, or an Account of the Habits of the Birds of the United States* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1831–1839)! Appraised at $30,000, this magnificent gift had been presented on November 12, 1954, by Mrs. Patricia R. Campbell of New York and Mrs. Gratia R. Laiser of Palm Beach, Florida, in the name of and as a memorial to their mother, the late Mrs. Gratia Houghton Rinehart, who had purchased the Folios in 1937 from the Duke of Newcastle. The Society registered its delight and gratitude with prolonged hearty applause. And the Board of Trustees, at its meeting on November 24th, voted its thanks to the generous donors by electing both of them Patrons of the Society.

Dr. Kimball now turned to our President, Dr. Fenwick Beekman, who, despite the ill-health which had compelled him to request a six-months' leave of absence, gallantly attended in order to address the Society personally on this momentous occasion. Before introducing him as a speaker, Dr. Kimball performed the pleasant duty of presenting to President Beekman the Society's Gold Medal for Distinguished Service which his grateful colleagues on the Board had awarded him with the following citation:

Twenty years ago there was instituted a Gold Medal for Distinguished Service to The New-York Historical Society. This Medal has been awarded previously to three Presidents of the Society: Samuel Verplanck Hoffman (1903–1912), John Abeel Weekes (1913–1939), and George Albert Zabriskie (1939–1947); and today we honor President Fenwick Beekman—eminent surgeon who served with distinction in the United States Army Medical Corps in the First World War with

the rank of Major, receiving a notable citation; medical historian; former consulting surgeon to hospitals; past officer in medical organizations; skillful binder in rare leathers of his own rare books; distinguished son of a distinguished family who with his family has made our Museum and Library the recipient of cherished possessions; long a faithful member of this Society, serving effectively on numerous committees and in various offices, including the presidency for the past seven years. It is with pleasure that the Society now confers on Dr. Beekman its Distinguished Service Medal with all the appreciation it signifies.

President Beekman's far-sighted address on "The Founding and Future of the Society" is printed in full immediately following this article.

When he had concluded, the President reminded his audience that five times previously in our history the Society had felt impelled to make public recognition of impressive contributions to historical scholarship by awarding its GOLD MEDAL FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN HISTORY—first in 1925 to I. N. Phelps Stokes for his monumental *Iconography of Manhattan Island;* next in 1931 to Wilberforce Eames for his unequalled scholarship in American bibliography; then in 1933 to DeWitt M. Lockman, N. A., for his noble achievement, through portraiture, in history; again in 1942 to George C. D. Odell for his life-work on the multi-volumed *Annals of the New York Stage;* and finally in 1947 to Harry T. Peters for his outstanding contribution to the history of American graphic arts. Then, turning to the distinguished historian and biographer, Dr. Allan Nevins, DeWitt Clinton Professor of American History at Columbia University, President Beekman addressed the designated sixth recipient of this honor as follows:

Professor Nevins, as president of The New-York Historical Society I have the privilege of presenting you with the Society's Gold Medal for Achievement in History as a recognition of attainments in American history.

As an enthusiastic scholar and inspiring teacher, you have stimulated students of a new generation to follow you in the direction which you have so carefully laid the way by your research.

As an author, your exact but charming presentations in history and biography have given their readers a rare knowledge of this great land

and many of its leading citizens—books that have been acclaimed as authoritative.

You have influenced public opinion for the better through editorials, delightfully written, which have been published in the daily press.

And now you are undertaking an unique innovation for the collection of historical data, The Oral History Project of Columbia University, in which you propose preserving the reminiscences of distinguished Americans of today in permanent form through tape recordings for the use of future historians.

It is indeed an honor, Professor Nevins, to add your name to the list of those of the distinguished men who have preceded you in receiving this award for Achievement in History.

Professor Nevins received the Medal from President Beekman's hands with expressions of the high esteem in which he held our ancient and useful institution and, being introduced as the principal speaker of the afternoon, delivered the brilliant address on "The Golden Thread in the History of New York" which heads this issue of our *Quarterly*.

When the applause of the enchanted listeners had subsided, Dr. Kimball closed the formalities of our celebration with the proud announcement of the publication on this day of *Knickerbocker Birthday: A Sesqui-Centennial History of The New-York Historical Society 1804–1954* by R. W. G. Vail, Director of the Society. He mentioned the book's 567 charmingly informative pages, its 180 attractive illustrations, its handsome binding and format—all for $6.00—a fitting monument to the Society's hundred and fifty useful years. Then, reminding his hearers that a handsome bronze medal which had been designed and struck to commemorate our Sesqui-Centennial could be purchased at the Reception Desk and that refreshments awaited them in the north rotunda, he stepped aside for Reverend Dr. Romig who pronounced the Benediction. Members and guests remained standing while a string quartette of the Juilliard School of Music played the National Anthem, then adjourned to the rotunda for refreshments and happy conversation.

CHARLES E. BAKER

PRESIDENT BEEKMAN PRESENTING THE SOCIETY'S GOLD MEDAL FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN HISTORY TO PROFESSOR ALLAN NEVINS, NOVEMBER 19, 1954

Seated, left to right: Dr. R.W.G. Vail, Director; Dr. Albert B. Corey, New York State Historian; Dr.Thomas W. Streeter, Treasurer; Dr. LeRoy E. Kimball, First Vice-President; Mr. Edmund Astley Prentis, Trustee; Mr. DeWitt M. Lockman, N.A., Recording Secretary; Mr. Forsyth Wickes, Third Vice-President (hidden by lectern); Mr. William T. Van Alstyne, Domestic Corresponding

THE FOUNDING AND FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY

by Fenwick Beekman, President*

I WELCOME YOU to this meeting at which we are celebrating the sesquicentennial anniversary of the Society. Yes! We are gathered here today to do honor to the founders of The New-York Historical Society, who met 150 years ago during the late afternoon of November 20th, 1804, in the City Hall (better known to us as Federal Hall) on Wall Street, to organize a society "for the purpose of [*and now I wish you to pay particular attention to the wording that follows*] discovering, procuring, and preserving whatever may relate to the natural, civil, literary, and ecclesiastical history of the United States in general and of this State in particular. . . ." This broad and liberal statement of the aims and purpose of the Society appears in the original act of incorporation which was approved by the Legislature on February 10th, 1809, and has never been changed.

The eleven gentlemen, the original founders, headed by John Pintard, invited eight others to join them at a meeting a month later when the name "The New-York Historical Society" was adopted (and I might add that our City's name was spelt at this time with a hyphen, though we have been criticized in recent days for continuing its use). It was not until the following meeting on January 10th, 1805, that officers were chosen: Egbert Benson as President and the founder, John Pintard, as Recording Secretary.

These early members, carefully picked from among the seventy-five thousand inhabitants of the City, were men of affairs and distinction, possessing family background, education and culture, together with a sense of responsibility and wise foresight and understanding.

* Address delivered to members and guests at the Society's sesquicentennial meeting, November 19, 1954.

Of the eleven founders, all but one were college graduates; four may well be classified as educators. Four of the founders represented the ministry and a like number the bar and among the remainder there was a physician, a merchant, and an author. A number of them had or were to serve the State or nation with distinction. But of greater importance, they were public-minded citizens—men who were interested in our older sisters, The New York Society Library and Columbia College, institutions of which a number became Trustees.

There was ample precedent for establishing a society such as ours, for during the preceding two centuries an unquenchable thirst for knowledge prevailed among the people of Britain and her colonies which reflected the social and intellectual character of the time. Societies of restricted membership and generalized interests were founded, in which the members exchanged their views through presentation of dissertations followed by free discussion. These intellectual organizations became most numerous during the golden years of the eighteenth century. The earliest of them was The Society of Antiquaries of London which came into existence in 1572, followed in 1660 by the Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge (in contradistinction, it is said, to supernatural knowledge, as witchcraft and divinations were widely believed at that time). Benjamin Franklin was the founder at Philadelphia in the year 1743 of The American Philosophical Society for the Promotion of Usefull Knowledge among the British Plantations in America, the earliest learned society of its kind in North America. Boasting a membership of distinguished men, including scientists, scholars, historians, statesmen, and public servants, its interests have always covered, at least in theory, the entire field of intellectual endeavor. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences was organized at Boston in the year 1780, and eleven years later, in 1791, this same city saw the founding of the first organization in the country with the title of historical society, The Massachusetts Historical Society. That the founder of our society, John Pintard, had considered establishing, for some time before, one

of this type is probable, for he attempted to attach a historical museum, in the year 1791, to the newly formed Tammany Society.

The founders of The New-York Historical Society saw a need of perpetuating the historical events of the City, State, and nation so that their descendants might know of the achievements of their ancestors as pioneers, soldiers, and statesmen, in establishing the Republic; and, as a means for doing this, of providing facilities for the storage of source material, both books and original manuscripts, for the use of historians; and of "procuring and preserving" museum material to illustrate the mode of life, the arts and crafts and other items of historical interest. This they set out to do with enthusiasm by issuing an appeal to the public requesting gifts of such items as have been mentioned and also those of animal, vegetable, and mineral specimens. So we see that the founders had a broad and liberal view as to the aims and purposes of their new organization: I might say they apparently considered it to be an infant prodigy. But from where were the funds to come to support these elaborate plans? Our historian answers this in these words: "The . . . Society started on a shoestring, except that it didn't even have a shoestring to begin with, just the optimistic enthusiasm of a small handful of local men of taste and refinement who loved history."

Yes! They were most optimistic and enthusiastic, but grave dangers lay ahead. The chief of these was the matter of finance. Although there was no payroll, as all services were supplied voluntarily by members, the lack of funds during the first fifty years, until the Society acquired its first permanent home on Second Avenue, was often acute—so much so that the officers considered at one time selling the books of the library, a particularly fine collection of historical volumes which had been donated by members. Later, a course of historical lectures was given for which tickets of admission were sold, but this brought little return. Another difficulty was the occasion when a group of dissenting members attempted to grasp control of the management, causing friction and hard feeling. And finally, the lack of a

permanent home and the frequent search for quarters (seven moves in all) made matters more complex. The library was closed on several occasions and the regular meetings were omitted for some months at different times.

These difficulties, however, were surmounted and during most of these years well-attended meetings were held at which scholarly addresses on history were presented to the members by men of importance chosen because of their authentic knowledge in their respective fields. The earliest of these addresses were collected and published in 1811 under the title of *Collections*. There were ten volumes of this our earliest publication, the last to appear in the year 1859. Meanwhile the library was growing through gifts of books and original manuscripts and a few oil portraits of importance were acquired and hung. The growth of the museum, however, was slow, probably owing to the frequent moves and much that was given were specimens of natural history, which, though acceptable as specified in the charter, were nevertheless unpopular with the members and consequently soon were disposed of. A solid foundation was laid, however, during these first fifty years upon which the Society built the firm and lasting structure that is found today.

During the second period, from 1857 to 1908, little more than fifty years, there was much activity in the Society, with well-attended monthly meetings at which lectures were given by prominent speakers who were well versed in history. And now new material poured in—daily acquisitions of importance and value for library, museum and art galleries—so much so, that by the time the central portion of the new building on the Park at 77th Street was completed in 1908, the structure at Second Avenue and 11th Street was literally bursting asunder with growing pains, it was so packed full of material that had been acquired for the most part during fifty years. It was at this time that we accepted gifts of valuable archeological collections and two outstanding ones of European paintings, material undoubtedly outside the field for exhibition by the Society if the

specifications of our charter had been followed. These outstanding collections, the Assyrian, the Egyptian, and the South American, together with the paintings by "Old Masters," were accepted at a time when the Society's museum was the only public one in the City. Now there are more appropriate institutions in the Greater City where some of these collections have been transferred, and the remainder are awaiting similar disposal.

Prosperity has continued throughout the third period up to the present day. Greater stress is now laid upon educating the public, both adults and children, through lectures and illustrated discourses on historical subjects. The museum has been expanded and rearranged so that it is more efficient in illustrating the story that is to be told, with exhibits that are popular with both adults and children. The art galleries containing the works of American artists include a fine collection of colonial portraits. The library, rich in material including rare Americana and books for reference, unusual complete files of newspapers, and a rare collection of original manuscripts and diaries, supplies an unparalleled assemblage of source material for the use of scholars. The wealth of material in the map and print room is a joy to the collector of rare sketches, prints, photographs and maps, or to the scholar searching for some particular item to be used as an illustration. The publications of the Society are used in every university library or important historical society of the nation. *The Quarterly*, having appeared regularly since 1917, is well known to all of you. The last four numbers have contained in serial form a most interesting and comprehensive account of the Society, which you should read if you have not done so. In addition to *The Quarterly*, many volumes have been published of transcripts of manuscripts, documents that have been deposited with us for safekeeping. These supply the scholar with the use of important source material, wherever he may be, where otherwise he would have to visit our library and seek for it in the stacks.

The Society's storerooms are bursting once more with contents, for our friends have been generous with their gifts, await-

ing the day when the building can be enlarged to provide new galleries for exhibits and additional shelving for the library.

I wish now to speak particularly of the future of the library, because of its importance; but in doing so I do not wish, in any way, to minimize the worth of either the museum or the art galleries which are known to be unique in their contents.

The past is behind, the future is ahead. History tells of the past, but whatever is said of the future is merely surmise devoid of facts. It will, however, do no harm, I believe, to prognosticate as to the future, using such circumstantial evidence as may be at hand to draw a few conclusions; although I pray that you do not hold me too drastically to account for what may be said.

The way of life is far more complicated today than it was in 1804. It can be truly said that owing to the developments in science, the discoveries and inventions which have been made, that more has occurred during the last one hundred and fifty years in advancing the conditions under which we live than up to that time since man existed upon the earth.

Rarities, both library items and museum pieces, are becoming scarcer as time passes, since there is a greater call for these objects, being acquired as they are in large part by institutions where they secure a permanent home from which they seldom return to the open market. The reason for this is that there are now more libraries and museums of Americana than formerly. A larger number of libraries are building up collections of old and rare books, files of newspapers of the past, public documents to do with the early history of the country, and collections of correspondence between persons of importance in their day. Some of these libraries are newly formed, others, like our own, are searching for appropriate historical items, and still others, formerly little more than reference libraries, particularly those of the universities, are adding old and rare books, and other source material; increasing in size by acquisition of new treasures through the generosity of auxiliary groups under the name of "Friends of the Library."

You may agree to what has been said of the increasing difficulty of acquiring source material because of rivalry between institutions, but some of you may ask: what of the multitudinous volumes, newspapers, and documents being issued today; won't they become in time rare and valuable for the collector of the future? Perhaps some may, but only a few, because of the inferior materials and workmanship used in the fabrication of these items as compared to those of the past.

To interpolate for a moment, let me remind you of certain developments that have occurred during the last hundred years: practices and customs, the result of discoveries and inventions of this machine age, which obviously have affected the importance, durability and value of objects that otherwise might be suitable for the collector of the future, for the use of the historian, or as exhibits in the museum. I believe it can be stated in a general way, that: As science advances art declines, since it seems that the craftsman or artisan of the past turned out, in small shops with hand tools, far more durable objects and material than does the present-day assembly line with complicated machines in some great factory.

Returning once more to the discussion of library material, let us take for instance newspapers, of which the Society's collection is in excellent preservation. Since about 1880, however, when wood pulp paper came into general use as newsprint, the life of the newspaper has been shortened as compared with those of an earlier date, as this material disintegrates within less than fifty years with the destruction of the text and the loss of historical records to posterity. Government documents and other forms of public, commercial, or private papers are similarly subject to deterioration and the loss of the overlying printed matter. Books —and it may be said that a far larger number of titles are appearing today than formerly—are liable to this same ending, although the paper of the more important ones is of a better grade than newsprint, and a comparative few are printed upon handmade rag paper which is difficult to obtain.

The acquisition of objects for map and print collections is undergoing changes that in many ways are like those that have been mentioned while discussing the problem of other library material. There is, however, one great exception and that is the result of a remarkable metamorphosis, which has occurred since the middle of the last century, from artistry to mechanics. Before that time, the freehand draftsman using pencil, crayon, or pen and ink; the painter with oils or water colors; the engraver working on wood, copper, or steel; and the lithographer provided the only means of portraying and reproducing scenes, portraits, maps and charts. Now, however, most of this is changed owing to the introduction of photography with its numerous collateral mechanical off-shoots for reproducing illustrations in black and white, and even in colors, and for the employment of the cartographer in printing maps and charts. The day is rapidly approaching when rare prints and ancient maps will be difficult to acquire since more and more of them are finding a resting place in institutions. Besides the availability of original photographs and photo-reproductions for this important part of a historical library, there always will be obtainable certain original drawings and paintings produced by commercial artists of ability for use in photo-mechanical reproductions on covers of magazines, illustrations in books, reports and advertisements. Many of these original illustrations are true and accurate historical portrayals and make worthwhile items for a map and print collection.

Modern-day manuscripts appear to be almost nonexistent since the stenographer and typewriter have come into use. Typescript has neither the charm or attraction to the eye of a well-written neat manuscript, and besides it is usually spread upon paper which will not withstand the ravages of time. The art of letter writing with fine penmanship and newsy contents is of the past, and there is no longer that full and complete correspondence between friends, business associates, or government officials as formerly, providing so much valuable source material for today's investigators—material containing important historical facts as well as interesting details, the chitchat of the time. Gone for

the most part is the admirable custom of keeping a longhand diary. It is no longer fashionable for the lady or gentleman of the present time to jot down a few notes in their journal concerning the affairs of every-day life: entries of their engagements, the gossip that has been heard, their business transactions, and even their thoughts on different occasions and the books that have been read—a most valuable manuscript for some research scholar.

There is but one other matter of which I wish to speak this afternoon. The original charter did not mention education as being one of the purposes of the Society. It was merely by implication (until the charter was amended in 1928 specifically to "include educational purposes") that this was assumed to be a function. And I am sure that you will all agree that it is a most important one. For what better use could be assigned to the fine collections of ours than for the study of history. One of the earliest undertakings of the Society, as you have learned, was self-education in history through mutual instruction at the monthly meetings, where distinguished fellow-members presented erudiate discourses—in unhappy contrast, it may be thought, with the present-day custom of engaging a lecturer, only too often, from an entertainment agency. The library and museum were opened in time to those who wished to make special studies, and this has continued to the present day, since many individuals avail themselves of the facilities of our library throughout the year. Classes for the instruction of school children were more recently established on a voluntary basis, and finally moving pictures, most of which are on reels of film assembled by commercial firms, are being exhibited in order to instruct the public in Americanism.

This is the extent of our organized educational program—merely a popular course of unrelated subjects in history presented to the general public. It is all very well, but is it enough? Should we not look ahead and plan for the future by expanding in this part of our endeavors through entering the field of higher education where the unique library material which we control

may be employed to the greatest advantage. Much of this source material could be of use to scholars, graduate students, or fellows. The fact that the stacks contain a large amount of uncatalogued, original documents makes it a "treasure-trove" and consequently a challenge to a research student.

This, I believe (and it must be taken as a personal opinion), can be accomplished through the Society associating itself with some university or universities, through which an organized curriculum could be established whereby graduate students and fellows might sign for courses in the history department of their respective universities for study and research at The New-York Historical Society. I say "associated," for it would not be judicious for the Society to lose any of its individuality or autonomy.

This plan if it might be carried out would, I think, be of advantage to both parties. Such an association would result in common use of facilities, there would be less duplication of library objects, and the introduction of rare items of source material for common use would be of inestimable value to all concerned. Most important for us, however, is that the Society would enter a university atmosphere with its stimulus and encouragement for original work, which no individual organization can alone attain.

The New-York Historical Society has come a long way since its founding, occasionally faltering but always advancing to keep pace with the conditions of life as they have changed throughout the years. There has been no inertia in this forward movement and there is considerable momentum to launch it on its way towards the Society's tricentennial. But to accomplish this it must be cared for in an intelligent manner so as to reach that goal in strong and healthy condition. It must receive wise counsel from men like our founders and the many others who have served with distinction upon its Board. Onward we must go with enthusiasm and wisdom, making such changes as are necessary to keep the Society abreast of the time and in the forefront of educational institutions with similar aims. God speed to The New-York Historical Society as it continues forward on its way!

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

THE OUTSTANDING event of the final quarter of 1954 was the program on the afternoon of November 19th in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Society's founding. This is described in an article on "The Society's Birthday Party" elsewhere in these pages. A chronological listing of other activities at the Society and by members of its staff from September through December follows:

September 24: The first meeting of the Columbia University graduate class in "Resources and Methods of an American Historical Society," conducted at the Society by our Director, R. W. G. Vail, with the aid of the department heads, on Friday afternoons throughout the academic term.

October 2: The opening of a series of 18 "Color Films of American Enterprise," each relating to a specific business firm or industry; these showings continued on successive Saturday afternoons through November 27th.

October 5: Illustrated lecture for members and guests by Richard J. Koke, Curator of the Museum, on "History Written with Pick and Shovel," describing the important archaeological discoveries of our former Field Exploration Committee.

October 6: Special exhibition of "Treasures of The New-York Historical Society" opened to the public and will continue into the spring.

October 9: Meeting of The School Art League in the auditorium to hear a lecture by Mr. John Bruce on "From Blueprint to Reality."

October 27: Special exhibition of "New York's First Subway," marking the 50th anniversary of the opening of the IRT from City Hall to 145th Street, to be continued through January 15th.

October 31: Miss Dorothy C. Barck, Librarian of the Society, after 32 years of distinguished service to the Society and to scholarship, resigned in order to accept appointment as Director of the Washington Headquarters Museum at Newburgh, N.Y. Her devoted colleagues on the staff, at a testimonial party in her honor, expressed their esteem for her as a friend and colleague and their sense of irreparable loss at her departure while wishing her the enjoyment of many many happy and productive years in her new home and office.

November 13, 15 and 16: Meetings of the National Audubon Society in our auditorium.

November 16: Meeting of the Grolier Society in our auditorium. On the same day Mr. F. W. Bilodeau, Supervisor of Education, was lecturer for The New York Public Library's Art Education Project, his subject being "New York As Artists Have Seen It."

November 19: The Society's Sesqui-Centennial meeting, with addresses

(published in full in this *Quarterly*) by Dr. Fenwick Beekman, President, and Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University, both of whom received gold medals from the Society—the former for distinguished service, the latter for achievement in history. A full account of the proceedings on this occasion will be found on page 91 herein. On the same day the Society published R. W. G. Vail's *Knickerbocker Birthday: A Sesqui-Centennial History of The New-York Historical Society 1804–1954* (xix + 547 pp., illus., index, $6.00) and Rita Susswein Gottesman's *The Arts and Crafts in New York 1777–1799: Advertisements and News Items from New York City Newspapers* (xix + 484 pp., illus., index, $4.00).

December 4: The first in a series of three consecutive Saturday-afternoon "Christmas Films" for children, shown in our auditorium.

December 5: The Society's third Annual Concert Series opened in our auditorium and continued on consecutive Sunday afternoons through December 26th. The 1955 portion of the series is detailed below.

December 6: At our annual St. Nicholas Day party, Admiral Donald B. MacMillan, veteran arctic explorer, showed the latest of his color films of that region with a running commentary entitled "North to Greenland and the Polar Eskimos"; the party concluded in Dexter Hall with the traditional refreshments and chamber music.

December 21: A Christmas party for the staff was again made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Catharine Prentis Murphy.

The general public, as well as members and their friends, will find several series of special programs to invite their attendance during the months of January, February, and March: (1) Our third Annual Concert Series will be continued in the auditorium on Sunday afternoons at three o'clock. (2) A series of eleven "World Film Classics" will be shown in the auditorium on Saturday afternoons at two o'clock. And (3) a series of twelve lecture-gallery talks on "American Arts and Crafts" by F. W. Bilodeau, Supervisor of Education, will be delivered on Friday afternoons at three o'clock. These three program-series are detailed for your easy reference below:

Concert Series, Sundays at 3:00 P.M. *January 2:* Chamber Orchestra under Livio Mannucci; *January 9:* Folk Songs and Ballads sung by Bernice Kamsler with Marshall Butler at the piano; *January 16:* Charles Treger, violinist; *January 23:* Folk Songs and Ballads by Nemone Balfour accompanied by lute and Celtic harp; *January 30:* Eugenie Dengel, violist, John Goldmark, pianist, and Julia Smith, composer-pianist; *February 6:* Sonya Monosoff, violinist, Paul Maynard, harpsichord; *February 13:* Woodwind Music by Whitney Tustin, oboe, Ernest Bright, clarinet, Sidney Rosenberg, bassoon, Claudia Lyon, recorder, Helga Tustin, harpsichord; *February 20:* Madam Ruth Kisch-Arndt, contralto, with Calvin Lampley, assisting artist; *February 27:* Chamber Orchestra under Livio Mannucci; *March 6:* Geraldine

Ruegg, harpist; *March 13:* Phyllis Kraeuter, 'cellist, Joseph Wolman, pianist; *March 20:* The Community Opera under Enzo Serafini-Lupo in Mascagni's "Cavaleria Rusticana"; *March 27:* Thruston Johnson, violinist, Otto Herz, pianist.

World Film Classics, Saturdays at 2:00 P.M. *January 8:* "Nanook of the North" (U.S.A.); *January 15:* "Pygmalion" (Great Britain); *January 22:* "Grand Illusion" (France); *January 29:* "Major Barbara" (Great Britain); *February 12:* "Young Chopin" (Poland); *February 19:* "The Bicycle Thief" (Italy); *February 26:* "Wherever She Goes" (Austria); *March 5:* "Song of China" (China); *March 12:* "Stone Flower" (U.S.S.R.); *March 19:* "Pennywhistle Blues" (Union of South Africa); *March 26:* "Adventures of Chica" (Mexico).

American Arts and Crafts, lectures in the auditorium followed by conducted gallery tours, by F. W. Bilodeau, Fridays at 3:00 P.M. *January 7:* "Early American Portrait Painting"; *January 14:* "Early American Arts and Crafts"; *January 21:* "The Rise of the American School"; *January 28:* "Painting of the Young Republic"; *February 4:* "Arts and Crafts of the Colonial and Federal Periods"; *February 11:* "American Genre Painting"; *February 18:* "American Historical Painting"; *February 25:* "Early American Landscape Painting"; *March 4:* "The Hudson River School"; *March 11:* "19th Century American Sculpture"; *March 18:* "Later American Portrait Painting"; *March 25:* "Later American Arts and Crafts."

The regular monthly lectures for members and invited guests, to be given in the auditorium on Tuesday evenings at 8:30 P.M., and the new exhibitions which will be previewed and opened to the public January, February, and March, follow:

January 4: Mr. James O. Wettereau, Associate Professor of History at New York University, will address members and invited guests on "The Livingstons and the Founding of the American Republic," at which time there will be a preview of a special exhibition of "The Livingston Gift" of letters, books, portraits, and other possessions of the Livingston family. The exhibition will remain on view through March 9th.

February 1: Lecture for members and invited guests by Dr. William A. Burns, Assistant to the Director, American Museum of Natural History, on the lively topic: "Science vs. Superstition."

March 8: Lecture for members and invited guests by Miss Helen McKearin, *the* authority on early American glass, whose illustrated address on that subject will serve to introduce our new permanent exhibition of "American Glass," including a selection from the recent gift of Mr. G. Clarence Michalis, which will be previewed on that date.

RECENT ACCESSIONS

A COLLECTION of nearly 900 books, pamphlets, periodicals, and prints relating to the American Revolution, historic sites along the Hudson River, and the cities of New York and Brooklyn; miscellaneous manuscripts relating to the Civil War. *Gift of the Estate of Mr. Oscar Theodore Barck.*

Seven maps of properties and estates in New York and a 1783 map of Canada; photographs and negatives of Beekman documents, seals, and property; correspondence of Gerard Beekman, 1900, and letters, 1912–1916, dealing with his philanthropies; two indentures, 1772, for land in Wawayanda Patent and in Out-Ward on the East River; two charts of the Beekman family, one with coat of arms. *Gift of the Beekman Family Association.*

Child's mahogany rocking chair made to match the parlor furniture of William Nagel Dyckman of West Houston Street, New York, *c.* 1825. *Gift of Mr. Robert Brooke.*

Oil portraits of Commodore Melancthon Taylor Woolsey (1782–1838), hero of the Battle of Sackett's Harbor, War of 1812, and of his wife and his mother, by Abraham C.D. Tuthill (1776–1843). *Bequest of Melancthon Woolsey Campau.*

Complete set of the Elephant Folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America* (Edinburgh and London: 1826–1836) bound in four volumes for the Duke of Newcastle, with the mahogany table built to house them; the five-volume companion set of Audubon's *Ornithological Biography* (Edinburgh: 1831–1839). *Gift of Mrs. Patricia R. Campbell and Mrs. Gratia R. Laiser as a memorial to their mother, Mrs. Gratia Houghton Rinehart.*

Five account books, 1865–1891, of a New York City painting restorer and framer (possibly James Oliver?). *Gift of Mr. Wendell Davis.*

Engraved sketch of a military plan, entitled "A General Deployment," used and signed by Sir John Fox Burgoyne (1782–1871); three New York deeds, dated 1818, 1824, and 1843. *Gift of Mr. Harry G. Friedman.*

Inventor's model of a section of the elevated railroad designed by Dr. Rufus A. Gilbert, 1874, grandfather of the donor. *Gift of Mr. Gilbert Gardner.*

Bronze statuette of "The Hiker," a Spanish-American War soldier, by Allen G. Newman (1875–1940). *Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Russell C. Graef.*

Oil painting of the Steamship *Arizona* built in Scotland in 1879 for the Guion Line, by an unidentified artist. *Gift of Mr. Prosper Guerry.*

Ten reports of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, The Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, 1839–1878; 39 addresses delivered at The Newcomen Society's dinners, 1951–1953, by captains of industry; four folio volumes of portraits and prints. *Gift of Henry O. Havemeyer, Esquire.*

Five volumes on the history of Albany; a bathing suit worn by the donor between 1900 and 1910. *Gift of Mr. John V. Irwin.*

Leather travelling trunk with brass nails used under the seat of a gig and thought to have been used by Wheeler Barnes, great-grandfather of the donor. *Gift of Mrs. John V. Irwin.*

Ten volumes of *The Journal of Commerce,* January 1945–August 1946. *Gift of* The Journal of Commerce, *Mr. John G. Mozer, Purchasing Agent.*

Scrapbook of manuscripts and printed materials relating to Rutgers Female College, New York City, 1867–1869, gathered by the donor's grandmother, Mary Matilda Ferguson (1856–1927), and five textbooks used by her. *Gift of Miss Ruth Keeler.*

Ambrotype of John Alexander Luqueer [Lequier] (1814–1866), the donor's great-uncle, who was the founder and first president of The Adriatic Fire Insurance Company. *Gift of Mr. John T. Lequier.*

Mahogany highboy made in Philadelphia, *c.* 1770. *Gift of Mrs. Screven Lorillard in memory of her mother, Mrs. J. Insley Blair.*

Letter of Mrs. John Pintard to her daughter Mrs. Richard Davidson (Eliza Pintard), great-great-grandmother of the donor, dated March 4, 1819. *Gift of Dr. Richard Screven Meredith.*

Seventy-one property maps of New York City and vicinity, published by J. B. Holmes and others, 1850–1893, showing old farms and estates of prominent New York families; 12 real estate atlases of New York City boroughs and rural districts north of the City, 1880–1908. *Gift of Miller, Boardman and Greenberg.*

Collection of about 200 18th- and 19th-century dolls and toys, supplementing the donor's similar gift of last year, all now on exhibition in the main 2d-floor corridor. *Gift of Mrs. Katharine Prentis Murphy.*

Twelve diplomas and commissions in the United States Army of Henry Lane Kendrick (1811–1891), grand-uncle of the donor; 56 letters and orders, 1846–1891, to Colonel Kendrick from army officers and fellow professors at West Point; 12 photographs of Colonel Kendrick; ten letters to Dr. Edward Henry Peaslee (1850–1930), father of the donor; 14 pieces of Continental currency, 30 pieces of fractional currency, and five Confederate bonds; 13 daguerreotypes of members of the Kendrick and Peaslee families. *Gift of Mr. Edmund Witherbee Peaslee.*

Oil portrait of President James Knox Polk (1795–1849) by Joseph Dickinson, 1954, after the original by George P. A. Healy. *Gift of the Polk Memorial Association.*

Over 450 photographs, including members of the Pell, Cammann, and Gallatin families, of royal personages and celebrities, and views of New York City and the Chicago World's Fair 1893; membership certificates, place cards, letterhead stationery, and a collection of autographs gathered by the Wells family. *Gift of Mrs. Edward Rutledge.*

Letter book of Alden Spooner (1783–1848), the donor's great-grandfather, editor and publisher of the *Long Island Star*, with 137 letters, 1809–1848, from DeWitt Clinton, Micah Hawkins, M. M. Noah, Silas Wood, Samuel Woodworth, and members of Spooner's family; bills, receipts, and miscellaneous other manuscripts; two invitations to balls, 1830 and 1831; also scrapbooks, newspapers, books, pamphlets, and prints. *Gift of Mrs. Frederick L. Slater.*

Eighty letters, 1832–1852, from Daniel Webster to Samuel Jaudon, maternal grandfather of the donor; 75 letters, 1818–1833, from Mrs. Anne Grant of Laggan to Dr. Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, paternal grandfather of the donor; and 16 other family manuscripts. *Gift of the Estate of Augustus Van Cortlandt Van Rensselaer.*

Four diaries of Alfred Wordsworth Thompson (1840–1896), landscape, figure and historical painter, and nine letters to him. *Gift of the Whitney Museum of American Art.*

Six volumes of postmarks of New York City and New York State post-offices, collected by Blair S. Williams. *Gift of Mrs. Blair S. Williams.*

Manuscript biography of Charles Cushing Wright (1796–1854) and of Lavinia Dorothy (Simons) Wright (1805–1869), great-grandparents of the donor, in two volumes. *Gift of Mr. Charles Lennox Wright II.*

TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

The New-York Historical Society qualifies as an educational institution to which life-time gifts of money or property or devises or bequests under a will may be deducted for income or estate tax purposes to the extent permitted by law.

BOOKS FOR SALE BY

The New-York Historical Society

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William Smith, *The History of the Late Province of New-York, from Its Discovery to the Appointment of Governor Colden, in 1762* (1830). 2 vols. totalling 780 pp., $15.00.

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